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WILLIAM HOWARD, VISCOUNT STAFFORD.

Beheaded on Tower Hill, 29th December 1680.

Pencil Sketch from Life, preserved at St Augustine's Priory.

[*Face Title-page.*

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THE CHRONICLE OF THE ENGLISH AUGUSTINIAN CANONESSES REGULAR OF THE LATERAN, AT ST MONICA'S IN LOUVAIN

(NOW AT ST AUGUSTINE'S PRIORY, NEWTON ABBOT, DEVON)

1548 to 1625

EDITED, WITH NOTES AND ADDITIONS

BY DOM ADAM HAMILTON, O.S.B.

SIGILLVM MONASTERII S. MATRIS MONICÆ

WITH MANY RARE ILLUSTRATIONS AND PEDIGREES

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CHRONICLE OF ST MONICA'S

D. MAURUS M. SERAFINI

ABBAS GENERALIS

Congregationis Casinensis a Primæva Observantia
Ordinis Sancti Benedicti

Cum opus cui titulus—RECORDS OF THE ENGLISH CANONESSES REGULAR OF ST AUGUSTINE—*a R. P. D. Adamo Hamilton eiusdem Congnis presbytero, et Monacho Provinciæ nostræ Gallicæ elaboratum, Patres ad hoc deputati a Rmo P. D. Leandro Lemoine Abbate Visitatore præfatæ Provinciæ tamquam Censores diligenter examinaverint, et nihil in eo fidei aut bonis moribus contrarium deprehenderint, dignumque indicaverint quod typis publice edatur: Nos, quantum ad nostram potestatem pertinet, licentiam concedimus ipsum imprimendi et evulgandi, si iis ad quos spectat videbitur expedire.*

Die 28 Octobris 1903.

Nihil Obstat:

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Archiepus. Westmonast.

Die xx° *Junii*
MCMIV.

To

THE REVEREND MOTHER PRIORESS

AND THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY OF THE PRIORY OF ST AUGUSTINE
AT NEWTON ABBOT IN DEVON, THIS RECORD OF THEIR OWN
HISTORY AND OF THE HEROISM OF THEIR FORE-
FATHERS WHO SUFFERED AND DIED
FOR CHRIST
WRITTEN BY THE HANDS OF THOSE THE FULNESS OF WHOSE
SPIRIT AND EXAMPLE THEIR SUCCESSORS MOST
WORTHILY INHERIT, IS REVERENTLY
AND GRATEFULLY OFFERED
BY THE EDITOR

THE BEGINNING AND PROGRESS OF THE MONASTERY OF CONSECRATED VIRGINS OF THE ENGLISH NATION OF THE ORDER OF CANONESSES REGULAR UNDER THE RULE OF ST AUGUSTINE, DEDICATED TO THE CONCEPTION OF OUR BLESSED LADY THE MOTHER OF GOD, AND TO ST MONICA, AND SEATED IN THE TOWN OF LOUVAIN, IN BRABANT, A PROVINCE OF THE LOW COUNTRIES

WRITTEN BY ONE OF THE RELIGIOUS OF THE SAME MONASTERY; DEDUCTED FROM THE BEGINNING OF ENGLISH WOMEN DEDICATED TO GOD, FIRST IN THE CLOISTER OF ST URSULA'S IN THE SAME TOWN

(*Title in MS.*)

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

Towards the close of the reign of Elizabeth, and in the earlier years of James I., a large number of English ladies, whose families had remained loyal to the ancient Faith, despairing of being able to enjoy the happiness of religious life in their own country, betook themselves to the communities established on the Continent. In due course they opened convents and founded communities for their own countrywomen. These communities weathered the storms of war and revolution in their continental homes, and the greater part of them have, during the nineteenth century, returned to England. The example had been set by the Bridgettines of Syon, the only English community that has preserved its continuity with the pre-reformation days. But the Benedictine nuns of Brussels, now at East Bergholt, date from 1598; those of Teignmouth, Stanbrook, Oulton, Colwich, which has a filiation at Atherstone, were all founded during the era of persecution; Princethorpe, likewise an ancient community, is not of English origin. The Franciscan nuns of Taunton are the community founded at Brussels in 1621; the Poor Clares of Darlington were founded at Gravelines in 1609. The Daughters of St Teresa at Lanherne and Darlington represent the communities of Antwerp and Lierre, founded respectively in 1619 and 1648. The Dominicanesses, now at Carisbrooke, were founded at Vilvorde in 1661.

The English Canonesses Regular of St Augustine, now at St Augustine's Priory, Newton Abbot, are the community that was founded at Louvain, in 1609. They were a colony from the Flemish community of St Ursula's in that city. English nuns had been received at St Ursula's in considerable numbers for a good many years previously, amongst their Flemish sisters; in 1606 there were twenty-two English nuns in the convent, and six had already died there, the monastery having been governed by an English Prioress, Mother Margaret Clement, for thirty-eight years before that date. Sister Elizabeth Woodford, though professed in England, had entered at Louvain about 1548. So that although the foundation of the Benedictine house at Brussels precedes that of St Monica's at Louvain by eleven years, yet it would seem that after the Bridgettines, the earliest impulse of devout English ladies in the days of persecution led them to the Canonesses of St Augustine.

Among the many benefits for which we are indebted to these noble communities, we must number the preservation of their priceless Chronicles. These touching annals, besides preserving the record of the long list of heroic families to whom we owe it that the lamp of the sanctuary was never extinguished in our country, let us into the innermost thoughts and feelings of Catholics in those dark days of persecution, and cannot be read without deepening in our hearts the spirit of faith. Second to none in this respect are the records that remain to us of the community of St Monica's of Louvain. They consist: first, of the *Life of Mother Margaret Clement*, and second, the *Chronicle of St Monica's*. Large extracts from them were made by Father John Morris, S.J., in his *Troubles of our Forefathers.* First Series. By the kindness of the nuns of St Augustine's community, I am allowed to give for the first time their Chronicle to the public in its entirety, only omitting a very few pages which the chronicler would never have wished to be made public. These two principal volumes of records are supplemented by other precious manuscripts, such as the Obit Book and Benefactors' Book, the Stafford and Townley Letters, and the like, in the possession of the community.

St Monica's of Louvain, as already remarked, was founded in 1609, and is now at Newton Abbot. In 1629 was established the community of Bruges, a filiation from Louvain, still flourishing in their old home. The community at Hayward's Heath is a filiation from Bruges, and the one at Hoddesdon in Hertfordshire, from Newton Abbot, both dating from 1886. The community of English Canonesses at Neuilly was founded at Paris in 1633. When Father Morris wrote his Preface, to which I am indebted for some details, three houses existed of English Canonesses of St Augustine; there are now five. The Canonesses of the Holy Sepulchre at New Hall represent the foundation made at Liège in 1616.

The present volume contains that portion of the *Chronicle* which opens with Sister Elizabeth Woodford's expulsion from Burnham at the dissolution, and goes on to the beginning of the reign of Charles I. It is about half the manuscript volume. It is supplemented from the Life of Mother Margaret Clement, a manuscript of eighty-seven pages, written by Sister Elizabeth Shirley, sister of Sir George Shirley, Bart., of Shirley in Leicestershire. The *Chronicle* is a volume of upwards of six hundred pages, and at its beginning repeats a small portion of what is contained in the *Life of Mother Margaret*. The spelling will be modernised throughout.

The text of the *Chronicle* has no divisions except the indication of dates. But it has been here for convenience divided into sections or chapters, to each of which has been prefixed an historical introduction. The object of these introductions has been simply to continue and extend the work of the chronicler. Her expressly avowed intention was to collect and commit to writing what she could learn from her sisters of their family connections and descent, and the sufferings of their relatives for the Catholic Faith. Hence it comes to pass that the scene lies oftener in the Catholic homes of England than in the Flemish convent, and the monastic chronicle has become a help of untold value to give light to the story of those days of suffering. My object has been to add further and ampler details to these historical sketches and give more fully the edifying records of our old Catholic families, since the sum of these records, if it could be given in full, would be the true inner history of Catholic life in England.

To carry out such a purpose would have been impossible, but for the labours of such writers as Abbot Gasquet, Fathers Morris, Gerard, Pollen, and Brother Foley, S.J.; of Father Knox of the Oratory, and Father Bridgett, C.S.S.R. Mr Gillow's *Dictionary of Catholic Biography* is, of course, indispensable to guide one in researches into Catholic history since the Reformation. But besides these and besides non-Catholic writers, an invaluable source of information has been put at my disposal in the manuscript records of the Benedictine nuns of Teignmouth and the Bridgettines of Syon at Chudleigh. While the *Chronicle* was being edited in the little Bridgettine periodical, called the *Poor Souls' Friend*, issued by the Syon community and widely circulated, I received much assistance from many quarters, and more especially from Mr Joseph Gillow, Mr R. D. Radcliffe, F.S.A. and the Hon. Mrs Stapleton, in addition to the untiring labour of a religious of St Augustine's Priory. To them, and to the Lady Abbess of Teignmouth, the Lady Abbess of Syon, and the Reverend Mother Prioress of St Augustine's, our deepest gratitude is due.

But it is of the *Chronicle* itself, and its value to Catholic history, especially in conjunction with other manuscript records of the Louvain Canonesses, that most account must be made. Those records contain many facts of interest, unrecorded elsewhere, and are our sole authority for some of the most striking episodes in our Catholic history. Thus, as an example of the former, we learn concerning the parents of the celebrated Widow Wiseman, that her father was a Vaughan, her mother a Tudor, and that she was harbouring a countryman of her own in the person of the Welsh Franciscan martyr, Venerable Griffith Jones. The Louvain Chronicle is our sole authority for the touching story of the secret visit of Margaret Clement, *née* Giggs, to the Blessed Carthusian martyrs in Newgate prison, which will be found in the first chapter.

This is, however, but one of a great number of events on details in the history of persecution which would be unknown to us save for the Louvain chronicler. If our historical prefaces have succeeded in illustrating, to a small extent, her priceless annals, they will not have been useless. Here and there some obscure matters have been cleared up, as in the history of the Forsters or Fosters of Yorkshire, where the Syon annals have contributed a chapter to the history of persecution, and revealed the sufferings of a hitherto almost unknown martyr, whose remains lie buried at the feet of Blessed Thomas Percy in an undiscovered tomb in the city of York.

Since writing the preface to the first chapter of the *Chronicle* some light has been obtained on the family of the saintly Margaret Clement just referred to. The chronicler only informs us that she was "a gentleman's daughter of Norfolk." In the Norfolk Visitations of 1563, 1589, and 1613, we find the Gyggs family, seated at Burnham, St Clement, and elsewhere in that county, connected by marriage with those of Deane, Hoo, Paston, Russell, and Clere. As there was also a Norfolk family of the name Clement, it is likely that John Clement, the father of our first Prioress, was a Norfolk man.

It only remains for me to protest my complete submission to the decrees of the Holy See wherever I have given to anyone in the course of this volume the praise of sanctity or martyrdom, or related any occurrence which may appear supernatural.

ADAM HAMILTON, O.S.B.

BUCKFAST ABBEY,
Feast of St Scholastica, 1904.

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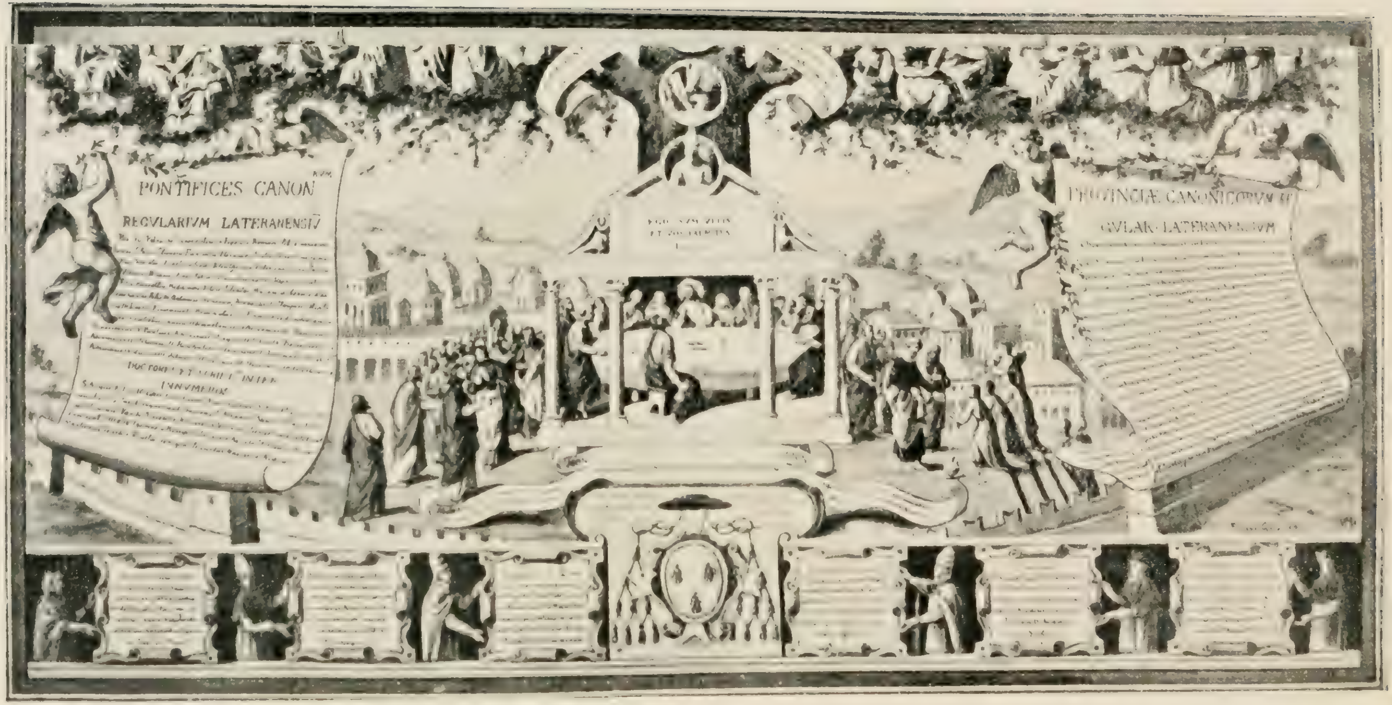

THE CANONICAL ORDER.

From a Picture in the possession of the Canons Regular in Rome. By permission of the Right Reverend Dom Luigi Santini, Abbot-General of the Canons Regular of the Lateran.

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CHRONICLE OF ST MONICA'S

PREFACE TO CHAPTER THE FIRST

Burnham Abbey, suppressed in 1539. Sister Elizabeth Woodford and the Clement family. The Carthusian martyrs and Margaret Clement. Her vision of the martyrs round her deathbed. Other relatives of Blessed Thomas More. Queen Mary's grant, restoring their estates. St Ursula's at Louvain. First English vocations. Margaret Clement the younger. Shirleys, Rookwoods, and Allens.

NOT far from Farnham Royal, in the south of Buckinghamshire, may be seen some remains of Burnham Abbey, a house of Augustinian Canonesses Regular, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. Richard, King of the Romans, brother to Henry III. of England, founded a monastery here in 1265 for a small community of nuns. The neighbouring manors of Burnham and Beaconsfield belonged to the Scudamores, a connection not without interest to our history. In the autumn of 1539 the work of suppressing the religious houses in England was nearing its close, and on the 19th of September, Sister Alice Baldwin, Abbess of Burnham, surrendered her house to the Royal Commissioners. Their report bore witness to the blameless life of the sisterhood, who had all petitioned to be allowed to end their days in some monastic house; and the monastery and its estates were certified to be in good condition, and free from debt.

The nuns were, of course, turned out upon the world. Their last days in the cloister must have been inexpressibly sad, for, three years before, Abbess Margaret Gibson had signed an acknowledgment of the royal supremacy, in the vain hope of preserving her convent. The sorrowful memory of her fall was no doubt one reason why one of her nuns used to exhort her sisters in exile, that if ever they returned to live in England, "they should not again admit Abbesses in the Order," a counsel they still observe. The name of this good sister was Elizabeth Woodford, and as she was to be the link connecting at least four communities of English Canonesses with their sisters of the old days of Catholic England, it is with her that our eventful story opens.

Sister Elizabeth, mentioned in the *Herald's Visitation of Buckinghamshire* as "Elizabeth, a noon" (a nun), was the daughter of Sir Robert Woodford of Brightwell, in Burnham parish, and of his wife Alice, daughter and heiress of Thomas Gate of Brightwell. Her father's family had come from Leicestershire, but, as in the days of Henry III. a Wiltshire Knight, Sir William Woodford of Woodford, bore the same arms as are assigned by the Heralds to Sister Elizabeth's father, and these are identical with the arms of the house of Cantelupe, I doubt if the Woodfords of Burnham were originally from Leicestershire. On the 2nd of October the nuns of Burnham would of course keep the Feast of St Thomas Cantelupe, whose head was enshrined by the son of their own founder, Edmund, Earl of Cornwall, at Asheridge, in this same county of Buckingham, and St Thomas's father was Lord of Woodford. Born in the neighbourhood, Sister Elizabeth had known the quiet cloister and the white-robed sisters from infancy, and perhaps they had part in her education; and on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, in 1519, she pronounced her vows before the altar of our Lady of Burnham. In 1518 I find another Sister Elizabeth Woodford, perhaps a relative, the senior of fifty-six nuns in the Bridgettine Monastery of Syon.

When the Commissioners had set their seals on the doors of Burnham Abbey, Sister Elizabeth's first place of refuge would be in her paternal home, under the protection of her brother Thomas. He was the father of twelve children, and she did not remain long in his household, but went to live privately in the family of an illustrious confessor of the faith, Dr John Clement, who had married, thirteen years before, Margaret Giggs, "a gentleman's daughter of Norfolk," the adopted daughter of Blessed Thomas More. Dr Clement was then practising medicine in Essex, living probably at Marshfoot, in the parish of Hornchurch. The accession of Edward VI. destroyed the hopes of many Catholics. Dr Clement and his family removed to Louvain, and there, in 1548, Elizabeth Woodford entered a monastery of her own Order, St Ursula's of Louvain. She had already superintended the education of Margaret, Dr Clement's little daughter, who was to follow her to Louvain, and to be the first mother of the community now at Newton Abbot in Devon.

Very wonderfully has the history of this community been interwoven with that of our English martyrs and confessors. The hair-shirt of Blessed Thomas More is one of their most treasured heirlooms, and for a time they possessed his rosary. Here I must go back a while, and insert from Sister Shirley's MS. a portion of the life of this Margaret Clement, which is more slightly touched upon in the *Chronicle of St Monica's*:—

"She was born of very holy and devout parents; her father a doctor of physic, her mother a very holy woman, as may appear in her acts, amongst all which, one is worthy of memory, which I have heard our holy Mother often to relate, and others also that had known her in times past.

"In England the persecution being very great, especially (of) the Charterhouse monks, who then were in prison and cruelly handled, and afterwards martyred for the true faith; which when she did understand, bearing a singular devotion unto that holy Order, and moved with great compassion of these holy fathers, dealt with the gaoler that she might secretly have access unto them, and withal did win him with money, that he was content to let her come into the prison unto them, attiring and disguising herself as a milkmaid, with a great pail upon her head, full of meat, wherewith she fed the blessed company, putting meat into their mouths, they being tied and not able to stir, nor to help themselves; which being done, she afterwards with her own hands made them clean. This pious work did she continue for divers days, until at last the King inquiring of them if they were not yet dead, and understanding they were yet alive, to his great admiration, commanded a stricter watch to be kept over them, so as the keeper durst not let in this good woman no more, fearing it might cost him his head if it should be discovered. Nevertheless what with her importunity and by force of money, she obtained of him that he let her go up to the tiles, right above the close prison, where the Blessed Fathers were. O rare example and courage of a woman! And so she discovering (uncovering) the ceiling or tiles over their heads, by a string let them down meat in a basket, approaching the same as well as she could to their mouths, as they did stand chained against the posts; but they not being able to feed themselves out of the basket, or very little, and the gaoler fearing very much that it should be perceived in the end, wholly refused to let her come any more. And so, soon after they languished and pined away, one after another, what with the stench and want of food and other miseries which they there endured. And because God of His goodness leaveth no good work unrewarded, especially such an heroic act as this was of this devout woman, I have thought good, to God's greater honour and glory, and her perpetual memory, to set down her life.

"She was brought up in the family of Sir Thomas More, Lord Chancellor of England, who, perceiving a singular inclination in her to virtue and learning, and that she was of a rare spirit, thought it good to bring her up with his own daughter, Mistress Margaret Roper, most dearly beloved of him, and so taught them both himself both Greek and Latin ; he excelling in both, as is well known. And he did so trust this our good grandmother—for so I may call her, she being the mother of our most holy Mother Margaret Clement—that she always provided him of all his devotions and secret penances of disciplines and hair-cloths which he did wear continually in the Tower of London, until the day that he was to go to his martyrdom, and then he sent it her again enclosed in a casket, because none but she should be privy to his devotions. She also having been married out of his own house to Mr John Clement, of whom he also made great account for his learning and skill in the aforesaid two languages, Greek and Latin, a rare thing in those days, they lived most virtuously in wedlock together. And being blessed with many children, he honoured them, being godfather unto their son, giving him his own name, Thomas, and sending him his blessing before he went to suffer ; who soon after came to end his life in our monastery in the father house (the chaplain's house). She did also teach her daughters both Greek and Latin, and did bring them up in such virtue and fear of God that two of them forsook the world and went to religion, the one being a Poor Clare, the other our most dear and holy Mother. But the times growing daily worse and worse in England, from schism to heresy in King Edward the Sixth's days ; this good married couple thought it best with Lot to depart from Sodom, and so betaking themselves to voluntary exile, left their own country, livings and rents, and with Abraham seeking only to serve God, they being the first family that came over to the Low Country, with all their household and children. Their first abode was at Bruges, from whence after some short time they removed to Mechlin, and there continued for some few years in all exercises of piety, visiting and frequenting the services of the Church, in such sort as her husband, Mr Clement, would never fail, though being well threescore years of age, to go every day to Matins in the Cathedral Church, winter and summer, and there sung the psalms with the canons, to the great edification and admiration of them all. And his wife frequented Masses all the morning long. She had an especial great devotion to the anthem of Corpus Christi, so as she would never fail to be at it, and would have her children to do the like. Their house was a harbour of all priests, who daily resorted thither for relief, and also for comfort in their banishment for religion, which they passed with great joy, constancy, and cheerfulness of heart for God's cause, animating all others to the like.

"But the time now being come, which God had appointed to reward His handmaid for her aforesaid good works done unto the Fathers of the Charterhouse; He visited her with an ague, which held her nine or ten days; and having brought her very low and into danger, she received all the Sacraments with great devotion. And being desirous to give her blessing unto her children, who were all then present except her religious daughters, and one more that remained at Bruges with her husband, she caused her to be sent for in haste. But she not being able to come so speedily, Wednesday being now come, which was the day before she died, and asking if her daughter were come, and being told: No, but that they looked for her every hour; she made answer, that she would not stay no longer for her. And calling her husband, she told him that her time of departure was now come, and that she might stay no longer, for that there were standing about her bed the Reverend Fathers, monks of the Charterhouse, whom she had relieved in prison in England, that did call upon her to come away to them, and that therefore she could stay no longer, because they did expect her; which seemed a strange tale to him. Doubting she might speak idly by reason of her sickness, he called her ghostly father, a reverend father of the Franciscans, then living in Mechlin, to examine her, and talk to her. To whom she constantly made answer: that she was no way beside herself, but declared that she had still sight of these

Charterhouse Monks before her, standing about her bedside and inviting her to come away with them, as she had told her husband ; at which they were all astonished.

"The next day, being Thursday, in the morning she called for her son Thomas, and willed him that he should take care that her apparel should be made ready, for by God's grace she would not fail that day to go to Corpus Christi anthem. Which he, taking to be spoken of distraction, and comforting her the best he could, to put this out of her head ; she replied that by God's grace she would not fail of her purpose, and that therefore all things should be in readiness. And so it fell out that she from that hour, drawing more and more to her end, as soon as the bell of St Rumold's began to toll to the anthem of Corpus Christi, she gave up her happy soul into the hands of God, showing to have foretold the hour of her death, and that she departed with that blessed company to Heaven, who had so long expected to be partakers of their glory, as no doubt she is.

"Her body was buried in the Cathedral Church of St Rumold, behind the High Altar, before the memory of Our Blessed Saviour lying in his grave, where also her husband was laid by her side within two years after. To return again to my purpose ; for this was but to relate that those holy martyrs whom she had so carefully assisted would come to fetch her at her last end. Which so happened, for at her very departure she did see all those holy Carthusians in their habit, perfectly appear before her, which with a smiling countenance she expressed to those who were about her, so that it was admirable to the beholders."

The story of the Carthusian martyrs is one of the most thrilling episodes of the period. It has been told by one of their brethren, Father Maurice Chauncey. Here I can only recall the order of events. The proto-martyrs of the Protestant Reformation were : Blessed John Houghton, Prior of the London Charterhouse ; Blessed Robert Lawrence, Prior of Beauvale ; and Blessed Augustine

Webster, Prior of Axholme, Carthusians; and with them Blessed Richard Reynolds, monk of Syon, and Blessed John Hale, Vicar of Isleworth. They were put to death with indescribable barbarity on 4th May 1535. Three other Carthusians, BB. William Exmew, Humphrey Middlemore, and Sebastian Newdigate, died the same heroic death on the 19th of June, in the same year. For a fortnight before their death, they were bound to posts or columns by means of chains round their necks and thighs, without ever being released a single moment for any necessity whatever. Blessed John Rochester and Blessed James Walworth were hanged in chains at York on 11th May 1537.

In the same year, 1537, about the end of May, ten more Carthusians were dragged from their convent, and committed to Newgate Prison. It was this last band who were visited in their prison by the adopted daughter of Blessed Thomas More, as related in the writings we are now about for the first time to publish in full. The names of the ten were: Blessed Richard Bere, Blessed Thomas Johnson, and Blessed Thomas Green, priests; Blessed John Davy, deacon; and BB. William Greenwood, Thomas Scryven, Robert Salt, Walter Pierson, Thomas Redyng, and William Horne, lay-brothers. All but Blessed William Horn, who was executed at Tyburn some years later, died of starvation within a few weeks. Their hands were bound behind them to the walls of their dungeon, and the insupportable stench and filth of their prison increased their intolerable sufferings. Six were already dead within about a fortnight of their committal to Newgate, as we learn from a letter of Bedyll to Cromwell, from which I transcribe a few lines:—

"My very good Lord,

"After my most hearty commendations, it shall please your lordship to understand that the monks of the Charterhouse here in London, who were committed to Newgate for traitorous behaviour, long time continued, against the King's grace, be almost despatched by the hand of God; as it may appear to you by this bill enclosed. Whereof, considering their behaviour and the whole matter, I am not sorry, but would that all such as love not the King's Highness and his worldly honour were in the like case. . . . From London the 14th day of June.

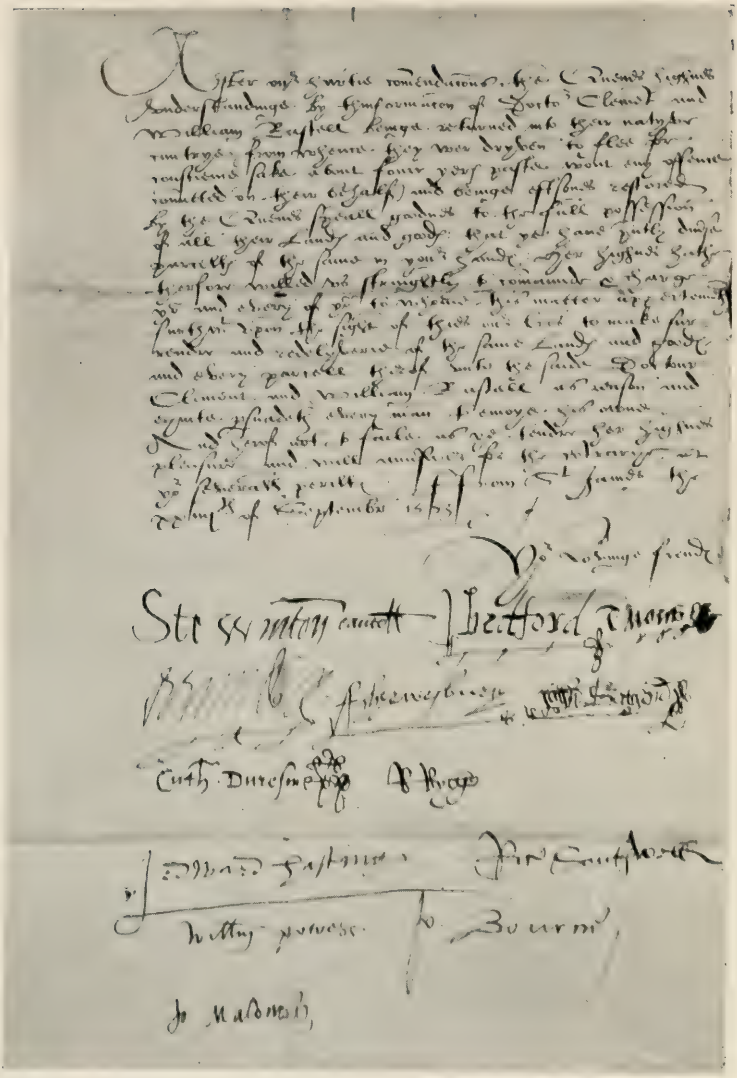
"By your lordships at commandment.

"THOMAS BEDYLL."

"There be departed, Brother William Greenwood, Dan John Davy, Brother Walter Pierson, Dan Thomas Greene. There be even at the point of death, Brother Thomas Scryven, Brother Thomas Redyng. There be sick, Dan Thomas Johnson, Brother William Hall. One is whole, Dan Bere."

Dan is simply the old English way of rendering the *Domnus* or *Dom* usually prefixed to the names of Benedictine and Carthusian choir-monks, just as *Sir* was in pre-Reformation times used before the names of secular priests. The "Brothers" named in the above list were of course lay-brothers of the Charterhouse. All have received the title of Blessed by decree of Pope Leo XIII., 9th December 1886.

To the above touching narrative I may add a few words concerning Dr John Clement, the father of the first Prioress of St Monica's. From St Paul's School he had been taken by Blessed Thomas More into his household, and while continuing his studies, acted as tutor to More's children. "I entertain no slight hope," writes his patron to Erasmus, "that he will be an ornament to his country and to letters." And indeed he was. At Oxford he was Cardinal Wolsey's Reader of Rhetoric, and afterwards Professor of Greek. Having chosen the medical profession, we find him sent by Henry VIII. to attend Wolsey in his sickness at Esher, and in 1544 he was President of the College of Physicians. He and his wife shared to the full the heroic devotedness to the Catholic Faith that



ORDER OF QUEEN MARY IN COUNCIL IN 1553, FOR RESTORATION OF ESTATES TO DR CLEMENT AND WILLIAM RASTELL. Showing Autographs of Members of the Council.

Photographed from the Original at St Augustine's Priory.

[*Face page* 11.

"To our lovinge frends, Sir William Carill, Knight, Dr Hill, physician, John Piers, clerk of the check, John White, Alderman of London, Robert Warner, gent., Francis Stele Cragge, and Robert Smyth ; and to all others to whome it appertaineth, and to every of them :—

"After our hartie commendacions, the Queen's Highness understanding by informacion of Doctor Clement and William Rastell beinge returned into their natyve countrie, from whence they were dryven to flee for conscience sake about foure yeres paste without any offence comitted on their behalf, and being eftsoons restored by the Queen's especial goodness to the full possession of all their lands and goods ; that ye have presently divers parcells of the same in your hands : her Highness hath therefore willed us straightly to comande and charge ye, and every of ye to whom this matter appertaineth, further, upon the sight of these our letters to make surrender and redelyverie of the same landes and goods and every parcell thereof, unto the said Dr Clement and William Rastell, as reason and equite persuadeth every man to enjoy his owne : And hereof not to faile as ye tender her Highness pleasure and will answer for the same, at your severall perills. From St James, the 24th Sept. 1553. Your lovinge frends, (Signed) Ste. Winton. Cancell. J. Bedford. Thomas Norfolk. Ormonde. F. Shrewsbury. John Bathon. & W. Cuth. Duresme. B. Buyx. Edward Hastings."

That Mother Margaret Clement's sixty years of cloistered life should have aided powerfully to perpetuate among her sisters the spirit of our earliest martyrs, and especially of Blessed Thomas More, need not be said. But for the moment we must return to Sister Elizabeth Woodford. She was destined to enjoy the peace of religious life in the quiet Flemish convent for twenty-four years, till her death in 1572. On this convent, to which the communities of Newton Abbot, Bruges, Hoddesdon, and Hayward's Heath look back as to their cradle, a few words will suffice.

It was in 1415, the year in which our own King Henry V. made his royal foundation of Syon Abbey, that a noble Flemish lady, Elizabeth de Wesele, founded in the Mi Rue, of Louvain, a community of Canonesses under the title of St Ursula's Monastery. Martin V. confirmed the erection, requiring that they should be enclosed and wear the black veil. Their foundress and her husband had been benefactors of the illustrious Congregation of Canons Regular, known as the Congregation of Windesem, or the Brothers of Common Life, which at that date was in its full vigour, and a century later numbered 120 houses of Canons and not a few of Canonesses, in Belgium and Germany alone. Its history has often been told, and will be written again, by abler pens than mine. A nun of that Congregation was placed at the head of St Ursula's community, and the spirit of such saintly men as Gerard Groot and Thomas à Kempis, with the largeness of mind, the simplicity and austerity, and the noble traditions of Windesem, formed the spirit of the infant community of St Ursula's, which, in 1515, finally embraced the Windesem rule. The Congregation of Windesem, which from its association towards the end of the sixteenth century with that of the Lateran Canons, became known as the *Congregatio Laterano-Windesemensis*, was overwhelmed by the storms of the Revolution, and the last of the religious is said to have died in 1816. But it survives in spirit and discipline among our English nuns through their descent from the sisters of St Ursula's of Louvain.

Though most of the story of Mother Margaret Clement's life is told by the chronicler, yet we must find space for a few extracts from Sister Shirley, relating to the days of her early youth :—

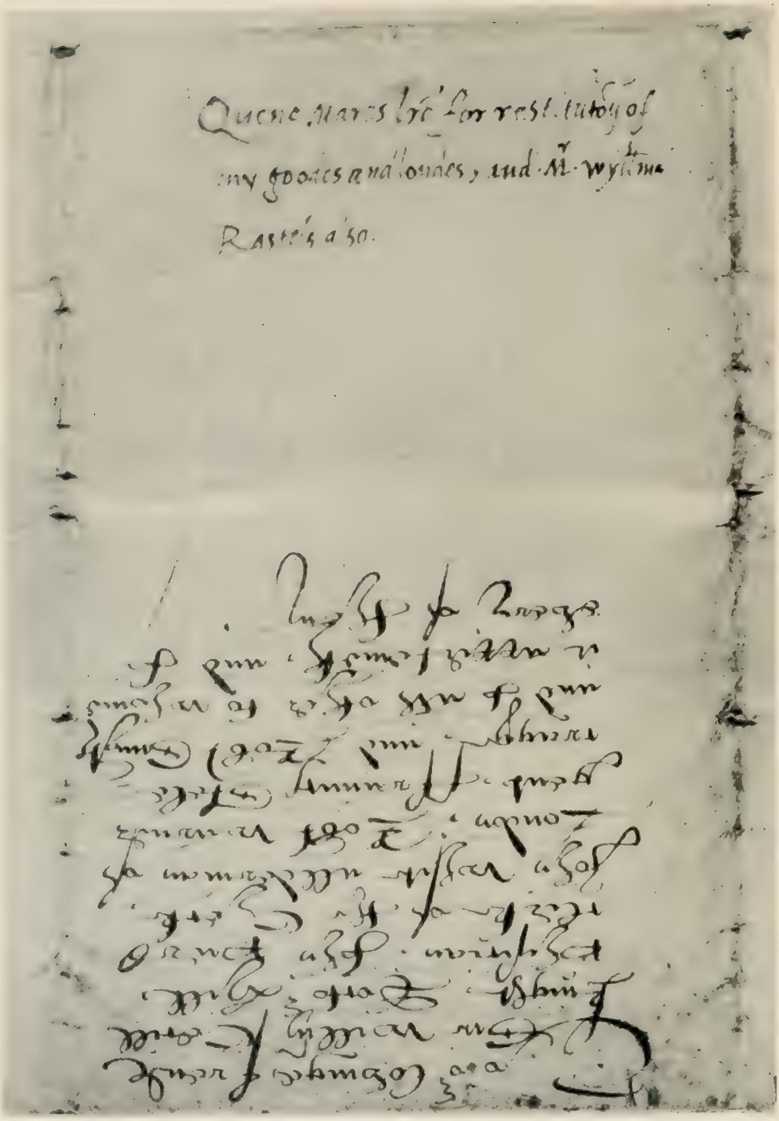
"She had another of her own sisters, that was also in the monastery, whom she loved very much. This sister could not give herself to any mortified life in religion, wherefore she was daily at her sister, to go with her out of the monastery, for that as she thought it was impossible they could go forward in that hard life, having been so tenderly brought up in their father's house. But God Almighty so strengthened this His handmaid, that no small temptation could withdraw her from her firm purpose of serving God Almighty, although she loved her sister exceedingly. Whereupon she herself made suit to her parents to take her home, for that she perceived she pined away with discontent of mind, and so her sister was sent for away. Then had she so great contentment and love to the place, that although her friends would gladly have had her away in Queen Mary's days to be professed in England, she refused it, and wrote unto them again, that if they would permit her to remain there, they must get her a husband which as she told me she minded not (did not mean seriously) although she seemed to say so, to fear (alarm) her parents. Her father showed her letter to Bishop Bonner, who, upon the reading thereof, persuaded him by no means to take her out, for he knew not what God had foreseen therein, whereupon he ceased to molest her any more, although they had provided a place for her at St Bridget's, and also made her a cell. I cannot omit to tell here the providence of God towards her, for not long after the same Monastery of St Bridget, where she should have been placed, was wholly dispersed and dissolved, so that the religious were fain to seek for themselves, by reason of the death of Queen Mary."

One little expression in Sister Shirley's book needs explaining. Margaret, on account of her devout simplicity, used to be called in her family "God Almighty's fool." The playful expression is not an irreverent one, and is an allusion to the old custom of having a fool or jester in a great man's household.

The circumstances attending her election as Prioress of St Ursula's are told at length in the *Chronicle*. One characteristic incident we may here insert from Sister Shirley, as it relates to the heroic Mrs Allen, Cardinal Allen's sister-in-law, whose two daughters were among our Canonesses :—

"One of the English sisters being very sick and at the point of death, her own mother (Mrs Allen) dwelling in the town, hearing her daughter to be in such danger, came to our monastery to desire our Mother that she might come in to see her sick daugher; the Mother flatly denied her, because, she said, it would be a breach of the enclosure, and she would not do it, by no means, without special leave from the Archbishop. This she said, hoping thereby she would have been answered, but the motherly heart would not be so contented, but went to the Bishop herself, and obtained of him licence to go in to the monastery to visit her daughter, which she brought to our Reverend Mother with the Bishop's hand and seal; which our Reverend Mother seeing, was somewhat troubled, that either she must yield to such an inconvenience or hazard the Archbishop's displeasure, yet of the two she rather chose to presume upon the Bishop's goodness, than to endanger the breaking of the enclosure. Wherefore she took heart, and absolutely denied to accept of the Bishop's commission, for that she said the Bishop was not sufficiently informed concerning the state of the House, for we being of two nations, Flemish and English, and she being English that received this favour, the other nation that had often desired the same, and had been denied, might justly take exception thereof, and so breed some disgust among us. Yet Mrs Allen, not being content, went again to the Archbishop, and complained that she could not be admitted to come into the monastery, notwithstanding that she had brought with her the Bishop's licence. The Bishop having heard her complaint, gave her no other answer than, smiling, said: 'I am sorry I have so few such Superiors, I would to God I had more of them.' And this was all the amends she could have of her complaint, as she afterwards confessed to us herself; and thus we may see how that worthy Prelate did greatly esteem of such strictness in observance of enclosure."

Of her happy death we shall have more to add in its



Quene Marys lre for restitution of
my goodes and londes, and Mr Wyllm
Rastells also.

To our lovinge frende
Sir Willm Cordell
Knight, Doctor Hill,
Phisician, John [illegible]
clerke of the Check,
John White alderman of
London, Robt [illegible]
gent, ffrauncis [illegible]
[illegible] and Robt Smyth
and to all other to whome
it apperteineth, and to
every of them.

Address on Queen Mary's Order for Restoration of Lands to Dr. Clement and William Rastell. With Mem. (reversed) in Dr Clement's Handwriting.

Photographed from Original at St Augustine's Priory.

[*Face page* **15.**

proper place. Following the example of our chronicler, it will now be my task to further illustrate the *Chronicle* by some account of those Catholic families whose daughters were numbered among our Canonesses.

From the year of our Lord 1548, when Sister Elizabeth Woodford, professed in England in 1519, entered St Ursula's Monastery at Louvain, down to the beginning of this twentieth century, the community whose annals we are editing has numbered 393 professed religious. In this number, besides Elizabeth Woodford herself, we include the 25 English who took their vows at St Ursula's while Mother Margaret Clement was Prioress; 157 professed at St Monica's, Louvain, between 1609 and 1794; and 111 more professed at Spetisbury or Newton Abbot since their return to England.

The first Englishwoman to follow Margaret Clement to St Ursula's, Sister Catharine Pigott, died during her noviceship. There is no record of her parentage, though the name occurs among the English Catholic exiles then serving in the King of Spain's army in the Low Countries. Francis Bygod, whose name sometimes appears as Pigot, a Yorkshireman, was executed at Tyburn for his share in the Pilgrimage of Grace, in 1537. She died in 1613, and ten years were to elapse before another English candidate presented herself for admission into the community. This was Sister Grace Neville, usually spelt *Nevell* in those days.*

Blessed Thomas Percy, Earl of Northumberland, and Charles Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, had led the second Pilgrimage of Grace. The savage butchery of the defenceless Catholics which followed on the dispersion of their forces, was urged on by Elizabeth with a ferocity that sickened even the fierce Earl of Sussex. Many Catholics escaped with their families to the Low Countries. A paper in the Public Record Office, written in 1575, for the information of the Government, gives the names of such exiles as were living then on pensions from the King of Spain. Besides the names of Tempest, Norton, Dacres, Markenfield, and others, conspicuous in the insurrection, we find the Countess of Northumberland, the attainted Earl of Westmoreland, Christopher Nevell (Neville) the Earl's uncle, and Mr John Nevell, living with his wife at Brussels. This "Mr John Nevell, gentleman," appears in the "Dirge-book" of our community, which contains the obituaries of the nuns, of their parents and the chief benefactors, whose anniversaries are to be kept. Sister Grace Neville is in all probability John Neville's daughter. There is a Sister Mary Neville in the list of the Syon nuns, and, at a later date, a Lady Abbess Neville of Pontoise. When our English nuns left St Ursula's for their new foundation of St Monica's, they took with them "one vestment of a kind of gold tissue, with a crimson velvet cross, which had been given Sister Grace Neville." Catharine Neville (Lady Gray), the Earl's daughter, was in prison for harbouring priests, as we learn from a letter of Toby Matthew, Protestant Archbishop of Durham.

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* See Foley's *Records*, S.J., vol. i., p. 220.

Only in 1593, ten years after the death of Sister Grace Neville, did another English postulant arrive, Sister Frances Felton. Besides the two martyrs, Blessed John Felton and his son Thomas, we find, in 1561, among the Fleet prisoners with Lady Hubblethorne, Anthony Poole, Thomas Large, and William Aldwin, George Felton, imprisoned "for the Mass." In a State Paper of 1578, George Felton petitions for his release, "having a wife and eleven children dependent on him."

From the days of Elizabeth to those of Oates's Plot, our community, as we have said, was closely associated with the English martyrs and confessors. One wonders what must have been the daily converse of the heroic daughters of Catholic England who lived and prayed together in the quiet Flemish cloister. Looking round the stalls of the choir in the year 1600, one would have seen there Anne Clitherow, the daughter of Venerable Margaret, the gentle martyr of York; Margaret and Helen Garnett, sisters to the martyred Provincial of the English Jesuits, and whose nephew was one of our venerable martyrs; Susan Laburn, or Laybourne, one of whose childish reminiscences was her visit to her father, the martyred James Laybourne, as he lay in chains awaiting his execution; Ann and Dorothy Rookwood, in whose saintly family fines and the dungeon were household words; Bridget and Mary Wiseman, whose parents had been condemned to death for harbouring priests; Frances Burrows, who at eleven years of age, though threatened with instant death, had saved a hunted priest from the pursuivants; Helen and Catharine Allen, nieces to the great Cardinal, and whose mother had barely escaped with life from the persecutors; and other noble ladies of scarcely less illustrious history. The long heroic line, after Margaret Clement, is headed by Sisters Grace Neville and Frances Felton. That the latter was a near relative of the holy martyrs, Blessed John Felton the Elizabethan proto-martyr, and his son Venerable Thomas Felton, I have little doubt, though I have not yet been able to trace out her history. The company I have described were really gathered together in St Ursula's at Louvain in the closing years of the sixteenth century. There are few nobler pictures in the annals of religious communities than that of those brave old days of this illustrious English House of cloistered religious.

Although it was in 1569 that the community of St Ursula's elected Margaret Clement for their Prioress—an act that redounds alike to her honour and that of the fourscore Flemish sisters—yet the tide of English vocations only set in with the arrival of Sister Felton. Between 1593 and 1606, twenty-five English ladies were professed, whose family histories would furnish a large part of the Catholic annals of that period. My task is only to supplement and complete that undertaken by the chronicler, as indicated by herself in the following passage:—

"This history hath been faithfully written, upon the relation of the persons themselves, concerning their parents and their own coming and calling to holy religion, and, for the more surety, after the writing, it was again shown to the same persons, that they might see whether all was right written and nothing mistaken."

With these words the chronicler of St Monica's opens her record, and they give us the secret of its marvellous interest to English Catholics. The honoured names of Allen, Clitheroe, Clement, Roper, Wiseman, Neville, Gage, Blundell, Vaughan, Jerningham, Arundell, Garnett, Rookwood, Copley, Shirley, Babthorpe, Clifford, Tichborne, and a hundred others, pass before us, as we turn over its pages, with many a story of calm heroism and quaint humour even, to light up the annals of their confessorship and martyrdom. From the lips of the sisters and daughters of those illustrious houses we gather the story of how their fathers and brothers fought, and suffered, and died for the faith of our Fathers.

Though not first in order of profession, we may well introduce here Sister Elizabeth Shirley, the authoress of the *Life of Mother Margaret Clement.* Sister Elizabeth made her profession in 1596, and died in 1641. She was the daughter of Sir John Shirley, and sister of Sir George Shirley, Bart., of Shirley in Leicestershire. But it does not seem that the Shirleys were originally a Leicestershire family. Their first home was at Ettington in Warwickshire, where we find a James Shirley in the reign of Henry III. His grandson, Sir Thomas Shirley, in the reign of Richard II., married a daughter of the Bassets of Drayton. A descendant of Sir Thomas, Sir Ralph Shirley, was created a knight-banneret for his distinguished gallantry at the battle of Stoke, A.D. 1417. Sir George Shirley, his great-grandson, was created a baronet in 1611, and from him was descended Sir Robert Shirley, the first Earl Ferrers. This Sir George Shirley, Bart., was the brother of Sister Elizabeth Shirley. The original Saxon name of the family was Sewal.

Father Morris, in his *Condition of Catholics under James I.*, gives a letter of Father Gerard, S.J., in which occurs the following passage:—"At the Monastery of St Monica's my cousin Shirley hath requested my coming thither for these three or four months, to bestow one afternoon upon her and some younger nuns whom she hath charge of, that they may all together ask me what spiritual questions they may like best; but I have never yet found a fit time for it." In a letter of Father Henry Garnett, the martyr, given in Foley's *Records*, and addressed to Sister Elizabeth Shirley (Father Garnett's sister was a nun of this community), he writes as to an old acquaintance:—"All your friends are well, and salute you"; he then gives her an account of a singular escape from the persecutors: "We kept Corpus Christi day with great solemnity and music, and the day of the Octave made a solemn procession about a great garden, the house being watched, which we knew not till the next day, when we departed, twenty-five in the sight of all, in several parties, leaving half a dozen servants behind, *et sic evasimus manus eorum in nomine Domini.*"

Sister Elizabeth's brother, Sir George, of Harold Staunton, and his two sons, Henry and Thomas, assisted our community with frequent gifts, and Sir George left her a legacy at his death. The names of these three appear in an indenture among the State Papers, dated 10th May 1615, "between Sir George Shirley, of Staunton-Harrold, Co. Leicester, Bart., and Henry and Thomas Shirley, his sons, and Robert, Earl of Essex, for settling a jointure on Lady Dorothy Devereux, second sister of the said Earl, on her marriage with Henry Shirley." Sir George married Frances, daughter of Henry, Lord Berkely. In youth a devout Catholic, he yielded for a time to temptation. By the Government he had been considered a recusant, and was proceeded against accordingly. But a letter from Sir Thomas Edmondes to Sir George Lake, dated from Paris, 16th March 1613, states, that "Sir George Shirley is much troubled that his armour lately has been taken out of his house in Northamptonshire, on pretext of his being a recusant. He is not one; has always kept a preacher, and been diligent as a Justice of the Peace in administering the oath of allegiance." It is consoling to know from one of his descendants that "he died in the bosom of his mother, the Roman Catholic Church." His anniversary is kept by our Canonesses. His son Henry followed his father's example, both in his fall and in his return to the faith. Sir Thomas, the eldest son, a man of firmer mould, is described by the same writer as "a violent and bigoted Roman Catholic, whose estates in Hunts, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire, and Warwick had all passed away from the family before the Restoration," presumably by fines and confiscation. Henry Shirley, the son of Sir Thomas, after suffering imprisonment for the faith before his eighteenth year, entered the English College in Rome in 1640. He was born at Callowden Castle in Warwickshire.

Sister Elizabeth Shirley died 1st September 1641, "endued with many virtues, a strict observer of the Order, and very zealous in the keeping up of holy religion."

Besides Foley's *Records*, Mr Evelyn Shirley's *Stemmata Shirleiana*, with the Dirge-book and Benefactors' Book of the community, throw much light on the family history of the Shirleys. A few notes on some other sisters professed at St Ursula's before the English nuns formed a separate community, must close the introduction to our first chapter.

The two sisters Allen, nieces to Cardinal Allen, come next in order, of whom Helen was professed in 1594, and Catharine 1595, of whose heroic mother we have already made mention.

She was the daughter of William Westby, Esq., of Westby, in Yorkshire, and was married to George Allen of Rosshall, in the County of Lancaster, brother to Cardinal Allen. They had four children: John, born in 1565, died at Mussipont in 1585; Helen and Catharine, both nuns at St Ursula's, with whom we shall meet in the

Mrs Worthington (Mary Allen).

Mother of the two Sisters Worthington.

From a Painting in the possession of Joseph Gillow, Esq.

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Chronicle; and Mary, who married Thomas Worthington of Blainscough, Co. Lancaster, and who died at Louvain in 1619. Concerning Mrs Allen, Father Parsons, S.J., writes from Paris to the Rector of the English College, Rome, on 28th September 1584 (Foley's *Records*, vol. i., p. 633):—

"She is the sister of the Rev. Mr Allen, the President of our seminary at Rheims—that is to say, the relict of his deceased brother, a respectable and holy woman, who harboured Catholics in her house and gave herself up wholly to works of piety, but now, turned out and spoiled of all her property, in company of her two maiden daughters, whom she rescued by stealth from the hands of the heretics (for the heretics had carried them off, as they are wont to do, to be corrupted in mind and body). After many dangers by sea and land, she reached this country poor and wan, but glad of soul; and so she went to Allen. This holy widow, after the plunder of all her property, was searched for all through England for torture, for it was thought that she might give some news of her brother Allen. And when the heretics thought that they had found his likeness (it was not so in fact, but the portrait of an heretical man), it may readily be believed how savagely they rushed upon it, piercing it with their swords, daggers, and knives, out of hatred and contempt for Allen. Now this I had from the lady herself."

In a letter preserved in the Public Record Office, dated from St Ursula's, and addressed to Father Coniers, S.J., Helen Allen writes:—"Our Reverend Mother would have written to you if she had not been so weak at this present. She commends herself to your good devotions, and also my sister Catharine. Good Father, pray for our Reverend Mother, that God will spare her life long, if it be His good Will. She is very sickly." (Foley, vol. iii., p. 210.)

Concerning Anne Clitherow and Susan Laybourne, I must find room for a few lines. The latter was the daughter of James Laybourne, martyred at Lancaster, 22nd March 1583. His name was omitted by Challoner from his list of martyrs, because he denied Elizabeth's right to the throne of England. But he appears as a martyr in the *English Martyrologe*, by Rev. John Wilson, published in 1608, and he is rightly reckoned as such, together with Blessed John Felton and others who equally denied Elizabeth's title, by Sander, Yepez, and other writers, as well as by Father Pollen, S.J., in his *Acts of English Martyrs*. The last-named author gives the history of his martyrdom. He was first cousin to Anne, Countess of Arundel, wife of Venerable Philip Howard, and was himself the head of an ancient family at Cunswick and Skelsmergh, in Westmoreland. From this account, I should say the stout old North Country squire was wont to express himself concerning Elizabeth's vices in terms more truthful than polite.

Anne Clitherow, to whom the Venerable Margaret, before her cruel martyrdom by pressing to death, sent her worsted hose and shoes as a warning that she should walk in her mother's footsteps, had herself suffered imprisonment for the faith in Lancaster jail. Though the Rev. Mr Mush's *Life of Margaret Clitherow* was not published in English till the middle of the nineteenth century, there is in the library of the Convent at Newton Abbot a little printed book by an anonymous writer, who had access to Mush's MS., which he had abridged. It is entitled, "An abstracte of the Life and Martirdome of Mistress Margaret Clitherowe, who suffered in the year of our Lorde 1586, the 25th of March. At Mechline, 1619." The dedication of the book is, "To the virtuous and devout religious Sister, Sister Ann Clitheroe, of the Order of St Augustin, at Louvain"; and the dedicatory preface ends with the words, "And so, being ready to serve you in anything, I will take my leave, and will begin the Life and Martirdome of your mother." Anne was twelve years old when her mother won her crown; was released from prison at the age of eighteen (it is not clear when she was committed); and three years afterwards escaped from England, entering St Ursula's in 1596.

Sisters Dorothy and Anne Rookwood, a name associated with Cecil's Powder Plot, belong to this period. Sister Dorothy Rookwood died in 1606, soon after her brother Ambrose had been executed for complicity in the Gunpowder Plot against James I., and it is a strange coincidence that ninety years later another Ambrose Rookwood suffered death on the same charge of high treason, for his loyalty to James II. In Foley's *Records* I find a list (in which there are some mistakes) of the members of this devout family, who in times of persecution consecrated themselves to God in the religious or ecclesiastical state. In the Stanningfield branch, to which Sisters Anne and Dorothy belonged, his list, corrected, gives one Benedictine monk, one Augustinian, and two Franciscan friars, five Poor Clares, and two of our Canonesses; while in the younger branch of the Euston Rookwoods the most illustrious is Edward Rookwood, who entertained Queen Elizabeth at his house, and was forthwith hurried off to jail for his faith, and released only by death, his house and land being sold to relieve the distress of his family, who were beggared by ruinous fines. It is significant that in this and other communities of this time we meet with the names of Catesby, Tresham, Rookwood, Winter, Wright, and others, near relations of the Gunpowder Plot conspirators; but of all those cruelly oppressed and misguided gentlemen, the most beloved and regretted was the gentle Rookwood. Whatever his guilt, it was atoned for by a holy death; and as everyone knows, or ought to know nowadays, the guiltiness of Rookwood and his companions cannot be compared to the fiendish crime of Cecil, the real instigator of the whole affair.

CHAPTER I

FROM THE ARRIVAL OF SISTER ELIZABETH CLEMENT AT ST URSULA'S IN LOUVAIN TO THE RESIGNATION OF MOTHER MARGARET CLEMENT, 1548-1606.

The Beginning and Progress of the Monastery of Consecrated Virgins of the English nation, of the Order of Canonesses Regular, under the Rule of St Augustine, dedicated to the Conception of Our Blessed Lady the Mother of God, and to Saint Monica, and seated in the town of Louvain, in Brabant, a Province of the Low Countries.

Written by one of the same Monastery; deducted from the beginning of Englishwomen dedicated to God, first in the cloister of St Ursula's in the same town.

THIS history hath been faithfully written upon the relation of the persons themselves concerning their parents and their own coming and calling to holy religion, and for the more surety, after the writing it was again showed to the same persons, that they might see whether all was right written and nothing mistaken; this being the first draught of the history which reacheth unto full fifty years from the cloister's erection, but beginneth above fifty years before, from all the English that began it.

In the year of our Lord 1548, under the reign of King Edward the Sixth of that name, religious houses being pulled down, and religious persons, both men and women, thrust out to lead their lives in great dangers of the world, and the face of the Church of England turned to heresy, Elizabeth Woodford, leaving her native soil, who before had left the world by religious profession, came into Brabant, and offering herself to the Monastery of St Ursula's in Louvain, of the same Order of St Augustine that she was, there to end her life in religious observance, as she had vowed, and was graciously received. And, in the year 1551, Margaret Clement, as yet but a girl, was presented by her parents to the same monastery, there to be brought up in piety and godliness. This Margaret was daughter to one Mr John Clement, whose constancy, and his wife's also, was so great in the Catholic Faith, that twice they undertook voluntary banishment out of the Kingdom of England, once under the reign of King Edward, and again under Queen Elizabeth, and at length both he and his wife died in banishment.

To this man had Almighty God left one only son, a grave man and well learned, but four daughters, all which he brought up in learning, both of the Latin and Greek tongue, and drew them with himself and his wife out of that schismatical kingdom; and two of his daughters he espoused to Christ, in Louvain, the one, called Dorothy, in the Order of Poor Clares, the other, named Margaret, as is said, he placed at St Ursula's. The wife of this Mr Clement was also a very pious woman, excellently well learned both in the Greek and Latin tongue, and was brought up in the house of Sir Thomas More as his child, and he used to call her daughter. Her name was Margaret Giggs, a gentleman's daughter of Norfolk, and very virtuous, for by that good education she gained great fortitude of mind, and learned much charity, which she afterwards showed in a singular manner by visiting and relieving the necessities of those good Carthusians, which being in prison suffered extreme misery. For which her charity she deserved to be again visited by them after their death and martyrdom, for when this Margaret lay in her deathbed, behold those holy Carthusians to whom before she had shown her charity, came and appeared to her in their habit as they lived in the world, and said that they came to conduct her soul to heaven. And as she was a relief to them in their sufferings, so were they a comfort to her at her death, who had found such means to help them when they were chained two together in prison and could not stir. She, disguising herself like a poor woman, got means to bring them meat, and to cleanse them in that filthy dungeon by bringing them clean linen to comfort them. These, therefore, so good and holy parents of hers, as they were charitable to others, and pious towards God, so were they solicitous in the education of their children; and one of their daughters, named Dorothy, being of sufficient years to make election of her state, according to her desire, they dedicated unto God in the Order of St Clare. This other, called Margaret, being as yet but young, they placed, as is said, in the Monastery of St Ursula's, that she might learn there the form of good life and religious conversation. And although this no doubt was done by the special Providence of God, who saith that a sparrow falls not on the ground without His special disposition, yet were there not wanting forcible reasons also to incite these good parents thereunto, for great was the fame of this monastery for the education of children. Besides, Elizabeth Woodford, as we have said, was there, a religious of the English nation, much esteemed of the Prioress and of the other religious, and well known to this Mr Clement. For, being cast out of her monastery in England at the suppression of religious houses, until her coming over into these parts she had lived privately in his house, for which cause he assured himself she would take care of his young daughter.

In the meantime a great alteration happened in the realm of England, for in the year 1553 King Edward died, being but sixteen years of age and in the seventh year of his reign, and the good Queen Mary was set up in his place according to her right of blood. Things falling out thus prosperously for the Catholic cause, those who before were fled through the storms of persecution into other countries, now, to enjoy the blessings of their own native soil, came home again. Of whose company was our Mr Clement with his wife and family, yet he left their daughter Margaret in the cloister of St Ursula, although she was not professed, nor yet had taken the habit of religion. But afterward he was not unmindful of her; desiring she should also be made partaker of divine benedictions in our country, he thought to call her home, and to that end sent to her divers letters, but could never prevail with her to be willing to return. For although she was but young, and in respect of worldly wisdom accounted but simple of her parents; yet the Divine Providence directing her interiorly, or we know not what other motive compelling her, she could not be induced by any reason to return into her country. Yet would she not flatly withstand her parents, but wrote unto them to delay the time, at first by urging unto them her earnest desire of religion; and her good father would not be wanting to further her in so pious a desire, but keeping still his intention to have her come back, procured her a place among the religious of St Bridget's Order, and imparted so much by letters unto this his daughter, who perceived that she could not by this means bring about her desire, her father intending one thing and she another, he to have her home, and she to remain still in that monastery which she liked so well. She bethought herself of another device, which was to write unto her father as if she had altered her mind, that if he would have her home, he would please to provide her a husband. This tempered her father's importunity and delayed his endeavour so long, till, things being changed again in England, the good man with his family undertook again his second banishment.

And so it happened that in the year 1557, upon the 11th October, our said Margaret Clement was admitted to religious profession, after she had been five years scholar and one year and a half novice. One year of probation had been sufficient according to the Constitution of the House, but the importunity of her father to have her into England was the cause of this her so long delay. And this her long probation was the more beneficial unto her, by reason that she did not one jot the less carefully apply herself to gain the perfection of a religious life, but it was a testimony that she had gotten already what some professed religious do not in many years attain unto, for, being proved by delay, her constancy and settled mind in God, and love to religious life did the more manifestly appear in her. By many ways was this servant of God at that time proved, and proof did show that iniquity was not found in her, for being as it were tried in the fire, she was not consumed like wood, but as gold became more pure.

Then was also in the same house, as hath been said, Elizabeth Woodford, who, although she was not her mistress, yet she out of love to her, for gratitude to her parents, of whom she had received the benefit to harbour in their house after she was thrust out of her monastery in England, and for the zeal of religious perfection which she desired might be renewed again in this young plant ; being herself a very strict observer of regular discipline, did well exercise our Margaret therein, and giving many mortifications, insomuch that she was accounted of the other religious in the House hard or cruel unto her. And they did not keep that opinion only to themselves, but would sometimes declare the same out of pity unto this young Margaret, and would sometimes ask of her how she could with patience bear such trials of one that had no charge at all of her. But she, showing well her humility, answering again that the hardness of her own nature did require it, she also said that she found by experience tribulation did give understanding, and did help towards the spiritual profit of a soul, and give her matter of a meditation and to lift up her mind to God. Truly, if we consider the trials which happened unto her in her life afterwards, we may see that this was not without the particular Providence of Almighty God, for to dispose her to greater matters, and was a means to bring her unto greater perfection, and she gained so much profit hereby, that some years after her profession she was chosen Mother Prioress and Superior of the Cloister, though of another nation.

For in the year of our Lord 1569, the Prioress of St

Ursula's Monastery, being very old and incapable to govern any longer, with leave of the Superior resigned her office, and this English religious, Sister Margaret Clement, was chosen to be the Superior of almost four-score persons—she young and many of them old, she of another nation than they. And, another having as many votes in the election as she, wanting but one, it made a great contention in the House, yet the Superiors dealt according to justice, and so her side prevailed. But the others sent to Rome and appealed to the Pope, who then ordained two Commissioners, great, learned, and prudent men, who, hearing and examining the case, should in his name compose the strife. The adverse part urged against Margaret her young age, for she was not above thirty years old ; they pleaded also the difference of her nation, being an Englishwoman, and they Dutch, and some other frivolous objections. Which the Commissioners hearing, and finding nothing else of greater importance, they commanded the religious upon their conscience to speak freely if they knew anything of her that made her unfit for government, but when they perceived no other cause on her part, but her zeal of religious reformation and strict observance of regular discipline, they commended her highly for it, and confirmed her in her office, establishing her with greater authority than perhaps any of her predecessors had before, inducing all to give their obedience unto her.

This new Prioress was a diligent observer of the Order, and well instructed and exercised in the perfection of virtue ; the old nun, Sister Elizabeth Woodford, having disposed her thereunto, as hath been said. And, first, she sought to bring in strict enclosure, for as yet the nuns used sometimes to make banquets and invite their worldly friends. Also sometimes they made comedies and plays in the monastery, and their friends came to see them. But this good Mother reformed all this at convenient time ; with discretion made iron grates to be set up covered with black cloth, and only one grate to be opened, by the Superior or whom she appointed. Also, she made such portresses as should not any more let in worldly people. Although some, who loved liberty, misliked this, yet very many were glad thereof, seeing themselves freed from much distraction, and (able) to serve God now quietly, attending to virtue and their religious duties. Many great crosses did this good Prioress undergo with a strong courage and a great confidence in God, as may be seen in her life, written by Sister Elizabeth Shirley, unto which we refer such as desire to know it more particularly. Only, in this place we will briefly touch some of the many tribulations which she passed.

The Prince of Orange, then, revolting and joining with heretics, the wars began in these countries, and one time there was a rumour spread in the town that the enemies were gotten in, and were killing the people in the streets. Whereupon, the Father of the cloister came in, when they were all in the choir, and exhorted them to constancy, saying: Precious in the sight of our Lord is the death of His Saints; and that they should now imitate their Patroness, St Ursula, and her virgins. But as at that time one of the virgins hid herself for fear, so now also one went from the rest and hid herself in some corner of the house. But the good Mother found her out, and wished her rather to keep with the rest, because they would not dare to attempt such wickedness when they were all together as if they found any alone. She also exhorted them all to put their whole confidence in God, who never forsakes them that trust in Him. But soon after this came news again, that all was but a false rumour, and no such matter as was related, frighting all with a false alarm. Besides this, they were also troubled with the garrisons of soldiers, which were to be maintained in the town, whereunto they also must contribute, although they were in want themselves. The country about being wasted by the soldiers, things were at an excessive rate.

Another tribulation she had in her time, to wit, an inundation of waters, which upon a sudden came and filled all the low rooms of the monastery, and the religious were enforced to keep above in the higher rooms. By this so sudden an inundation they suffered much loss in their victuals and provision, so as they had not meat and drink to refresh themselves. Besides that, the wall of the monastery was broken down by the force of the water, so that, the enclosure being down, any might come in. But the worthy Prioress took such good order, that their enclosure was soon made fast again, though they were not able to build up the wall, for they suffered such want so that the Mother was forced to go into Antwerp and other towns to get relief for her poor monastery. For they were glad to take the parings of turnips which their neighbours gave them, wanting other food to suffice nature.

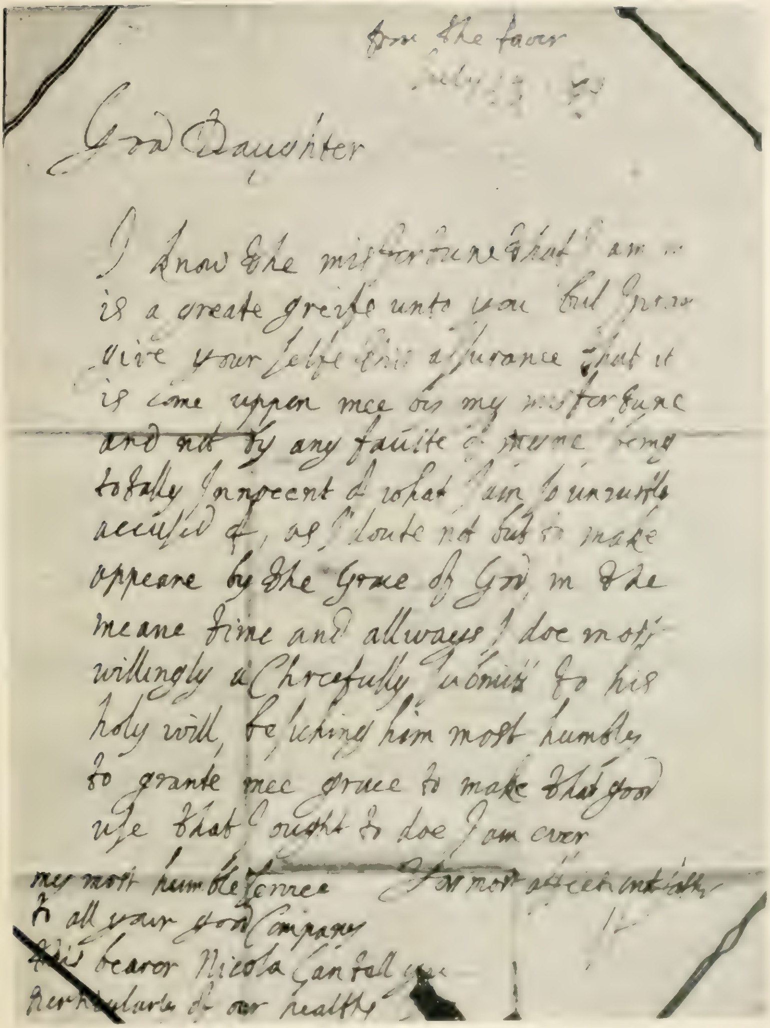
After this she suffered another great misery, for, the plague being in the town, her cloister came also to be infected, and there died, both within and without, in the Father's house about twenty persons, and the good Mother's grief was then, that she could not help and assist them at their death. Yet nevertheless she did what she could, and would go to the window of the place where they lay, and give them many good admonitions. It happened at length that one was infected, of whose sanctity she had more esteem than the rest, and after her usual pious discourse she desired and also commanded her, so far as she might, that when she came to heaven, she would implore the goodness of God to withdraw His hand from the monastery, which the good religious promised her to do; and the effect showed that our Lord heard her prayers, for after this time no more died of that disease, though some were infected. These and other miseries did this good Mother suffer for the space of more than twenty years, not receiving all this time scarce any but very few persons, and accounted herself a barren Mother.

In the year 1570, upon the 25th day of October, died the old nun, Elizabeth Woodford. She was a substantial woman, and a strict observer of religion, although somewhat severe, as they used in old time to be towards youth in England. She had been professed fifty-three years, twenty-four of which she lived in St Ursula's Monastery, and the other years in England, she being professed there upon the day of our Blessed Lady's Conception, in the year 1519. She was of so good a judgment, that the Prioress of St Ursula's would often ask her council and follow her advice in matters of moment. She would sometimes advise the young nun, Sister Margaret Clement, that if ever she came into England, they should not admit of Abbesses in this Order, for the great abuses that she had seen to enter into religion thereby, and would probably be again introduced. But Prioresses were in England of far better observance of the Order.

1573. Died, Sister Catharine Pigot, in the seventh month of her noviceship, being received in this time of misery.

1583. Died, Sister Grace Nevel (Neville), a professed nun. But afterwards it pleased our Lord to comfort this good Mother by sending her many happy children out of England to be religious; understanding there was an English Prioress in the Monastery of St Ursula's, they did willingly enter there to be under her government. In the year of our Lord 1592, came two gentlewomen, Frances Felton and Mary Best, and they were professed the year after: also Mrs Allen, widow to Mr George Allen of Rossall, in Lancashire, came over about this time, with her three daughters. Two of them, Helen and Catharine, she put into the monastery, and lived in this town many years until her death. The youngest daughter, Mistress Mary, married Mr Worthington of Barch (Blainsco), in Lancashire.

In the year 1593, came to religion two sisters, Mary and Bridget Wiseman; in the same year, Margaret Garnett, sister to Father Henry Garnett, and Dorothy Rookwood. The next year after was professed Sister Helen Allen, and also an English lay-sister, Margaret Offspring. The next



from the fauor
July 13 [illegible]

Good Daughter

I know the misfortune that I am in
is a greate greife unto you but I pray
give your selfe this assurance that it
is come uppon mee as my misfortune
and not by any faulte of myne being
totally Innocent of what I am so unjustly
accused of, as I doute not but to make
appeare by the Grace of God, in the
meane time and allwayes I doe most
willingly & chearefully submitt to his
holy will, beseeching him most humbly
to grante mee grace to make that good
use that I ought to doe I am ever

my most humble service
to all your good Company
this bearor Nicola can tell you
perticulars of our healths

Yor most affectionately

Letter of Ven. William Howard, Viscount Stafford.

Written to his Daughter, a Nun at St Monica's, after his Arrest.

Photographed from Original at St Augustine's Priory.

[*Face page* 32.

year were professed two nuns more, Sister Catharine Allen and Sister Mary Wiseman; and Sister Margaret Garnett the same year, upon the 5th of June, as also Sister Dorothy Rookwood with them. This year died one Ellen Deacon, a scholar, but professed a white sister in her deathbed. She should have been a nun if she had lived. Lucy Gage died also a scholar, having been many years in the monastery, put by her friends to live so, because she was simple. The next year, 1596, was professed Sister Elizabeth Shirley, as also Sister Ann Rookwood. This year entered the monastery Sister Anne Clitherow, daughter to Mrs Clitherow, the proto-martyr of her sex in England, who followed well her holy mother's virtuous steps, for she was a very good religious, who set herself seriously to the ways of perfection, and our sisters that came hither used to praise her much, saying that she laboured well in the overcoming of her nature and the practice of solid virtue. She also by her own industry got the Latin tongue so well as to understand it perfectly, which made all to wonder. She also assisted Sister Elizabeth Shirley much in the erection of this monastery, being very earnest in so good a work, although she never came hither herself, because she wanted friends to allow her means. Yet she was a good agent therein by counsel and assisting of them. Being also contented in her own monastery, she passed her life happily, rejoicing to hear of our good progress and increase here; for we used commonly to send our scholars before their clothing to see the English that remained there. For four lived long there—Sister Felton, Sister Garnet, Sister Clitherow, and Sister Rookwood.

In 1597 was professed Sister Helenor (Eleanor) Garnett, sister to the other Garnett; also Sister Frances Burrowes, and Sister Catharine Tremain, with another Dutch novice; for some Dutch also entered after the miserable times. In the year 1598 was professed Sister Frances Harbert (Herbert), Sister Barbara Wilford, Sister Margaret Tremain, Sister Elizabeth Dumford, Sister Anne

Clitherow, and Sister Frances Blase. In 1599 was professed Sister Mary Welch, Sister Ann Brumfield, Sister Susan Laborn. The year 1601 was professed Sister Ann Tremain. And in the year 1603 died Sister Catharine Tremain, a good religious, and fervent to do all she could, coming to religion when she was in years; (and) Sister Helen Allen, a fervent religious, and very hard to herself. All these did the good Mother receive out of England, who by their portion did relieve the cloister, yet not so well but that they fared hard enough still, as we shall declare hereafter.

Anno Domini 1606, when this worthy Prioress, Mother Margaret Clement, had now laudably governed the Monastery of St Ursula's thirty-eight years, she was to keep her jubilee of fifty years' profession. Wherefore she procured of her nephew, Dr Clement, ten pounds sterling, to make the feast and solemnity withal. There were at that present living in the cloister some twenty-two English religious, and six (were) dead, viz., two scholars, three nuns, and one white sister, professed on her deathbed: for she had received about thirty in all, besides English gentlemen's children, to be brought up for awhile there. This good mother took in her novice year for her jubilee, according to the custom of our Order.

There was great joy and feast all the week, for she was very well beloved of the religious, as her virtue deserved, and they lived very peacefully under her government, although they were of different nations, qualities, and conditions, as gentlewomen and persons of mean degree; notwithstanding, there was such grace and virtue among them that it plainly appeared God was there. For although the House was very poor in temporal maintenance, yet the Order was strictly observed, and the English, having been brought up, most of them, tenderly and daintily in their parents' or friends' houses, nevertheless for the love of Christ unto whom they were espoused, did willingly accommodate themselves to the hard fare and simple diet of the cloister, dressed after the Dutch manner, which indeed was so very mean as to deserve to be recorded to posterity, that we might know with what fervour our elders began to serve God in holy religion.

Their bread was of coarse rye, their beer exceeding small. Their ordinary fare was a mess of porridge made of herbs called *warremus*, sodden together with water only, and thereunto they added at dinner a little piece of black beef, about the greatness of two fingers, and at night for supper they had only a dish of some three or four little pieces of mutton, sodden with broth, which was to pass a table of ten nuns, to this was added bread and butter; nothing else. In Lent also, when they fasted, the fare was very hard, for they had only a mess of porridge of the Dutch fashion, half a herring or suchlike thing each one, and some little portion of peas dressed with lamp oil. Only, one day in the week, the Lord Mayor's wife of the town gave the religious a dinner, of charity, and then they had a portion of salt-fish about the bigness of three fingers, with a little spoonful of salad oil, which was accounted great cheer. For their collation at night, nothing else but a piece of the foresaid black rye bread and small beer. Only, one day in the week, each had a portion of common gingerbread, of one finger's thickness.

The Mother herein assisted the English with the alms and relief which their friends sent them, for they had each a little loaf of wheat bread allowed them every week, because some were sickly and could very hardly pass with the rye bread. Also they had some oatmeal porridge made for them, and the sick were assisted with what the house could afford, which was very little. Besides this, their labours in exterior works were hard for gentlewomen to undergo, as washing of linsey-woolsey clothes, which were to be beaten (as the manner is) in such sort that some of the nuns were sore after the wash-day in all their limbs as if they had been disjointed, besides the washing of linen in lye, which fetched the skin off their fingers; also they helped to mould the great loaves of rye bread, weeded the ways of the paved courts within the cloister, and swept the house, every one as they were able and appointed to do by obedience. Moreover, one or two of them were put into a warehouse, (where) they had to weave linen in looms, which was indeed a man's work, and very hard for tender, weak women. All this notwithstanding, they passed with alacrity of mind for the love of God, and would be as merry with each other as if they had been in the world amidst all dainties and pleasures ; also they assisted one the other in their necessities with great love, so that what poverty took away, charity supplied and made up. The English nuns also, being young, helped the old Dutch religious in their cells to go to bed, and, when they needed it, made daily their beds with joy and humility for God's sake, such as might in the world have been their chambermaids.

Moreover, the Order, as hath been said, was exactly observed. They had not daily two hours of recreation, as now we have, but only two days in the week, all the afternoon, they had leave to speak kindly together at their work in the work-chamber. But in the Lent and Advent they had no time of recreation at all. The choir also was heavy and painful, for they had no organ, until Sister Mary Scidmoor (Skidmore, Scudamore) came, and so the burthen of all the service lay upon their voices, and they sang Matins very often. Besides this, the old Office was longer and more painful than the Roman, which they took on them, and they rose at midnight as we now do.

The good religious passing thus their days with fervour of spirit, it pleased Almighty God now to release the worthy Mother of her heavy charge, and give her some time before her death to do Him service in another kind. One day having kept chapter in the morning, as the manner is, it being then broad day, she perceived her sight was wholly gone, for she saw no light at all ; having some time before lost the sight of one eye, the other was then also become blind. Wherefore she said gravely to one of the religious: It is now time for me to leave off keeping chapter; and soon after sent to inform the head Superiors, to the grief of the whole convent, that she desired to be released of her charge, by reason of her years and of this accident. They being informed thereof, came Doctor Jansonius, who had been before their Visitor, being Commissary under the Bishop, and now having given over the said office, he brought with him his successor in that place, who was brother to the Sub-Prioress of the cloister. They being come, the religious were all called by the bell into the Chapter-house, as the custom is, and being there assembled, they declared unto the congregation, that the cause of their coming was to release the Mother of her charge and office, and then called for her. She being brought in by some that led her, coming before them, humbly kneeled down, and would have prostrated herself, but they would not permit her. Then they asked what she desired. She answered, it was to be released of her charge of government, for that she could not in conscience any more perform the same, being become wholly blind. The Visitors said again they were willing to grant her desire for her own good, but were sorry for the loss that all the convent should incur thereby. She replied that there were enough who could do it much better. They then absolved her of the office and charge, making the sign of the cross, and requested that she would still assist with her good counsel and advice as need required.

They also appointed she should keep her place next to the Sub-Prioress, but she would in no case accept of it, because there were some older than herself in profession, which she was loath to take place of, therefore desired earnestly she might keep the place which she had according to her profession, as all the rest did; so they condescended to her modesty herein. But they ordained notwithstanding that she should be one of the council sisters, which never are above seven, and there being already the whole number, she was very unwilling that any of them should be put out for her. Whereupon they decreed there should be eight as long as she lived, and then to keep the former number as before. This shows how desirous they were to have still her help and assistance. After this she was led to her own place, as was assigned, with many a weeping eye of the religious, especially the English, whose hearts were in a heavy case, not knowing what alteration might happen, and seeing what difficulties they sustained by the poverty of the House, wherefore they began to think it were best to choose an Englishwoman again for Superior, that they might have relief from their own nation.

PREFACE TO CHAPTER THE SECOND

The Chaplains of St Monica's. The Revv. John Fenn, Stephen Barnes, John Bolt; the Rev. John Redman, D.D. The Wisemans of Braddocks. The Vaughans of Courtfield.

The record of the chaplains of St Monica's has an interest of its own, from the fact that they were men trained in the school of persecution. Father Fenn, brother to a venerable martyr, and who had been chaplain to Sir William Stanley's regiment, was at St Ursula's as early as 1601, became in 1609 the first chaplain of St Monica's, and died in 1615, on the Feast of St John the Evangelist. "Having been a long time blind and decrepit, he lived a true sincere man, one of the old stamp, and served God faithfully, and our Lord rewarded him with an easy death, and took him out of this life upon his patron's, St John's day."

He was the eldest of three brothers, of Montacute, in Somersetshire. His youngest brother, the Venerable James Fenn, martyr, was a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, but was expelled from Oxford for his faith. He married, and after his wife's death was ordained priest. On 12th February 1574, he was, with four other priests, executed at Tyburn; his little daughter, Frances, having received his blessing after he was bound on the hurdle at the gate of the Tower. Robert, the second brother, also a priest, was imprisoned in the Marshalsea, tortured, and banished. John and Robert were both in their youth choristers of Wells Cathedral, and both Fellows of New College, Oxford, John having been previously educated at

Winchester School. In Elizabeth's reign, John Fenn was deprived both of his fellowship and of the headmastership of the school of St Edmundsbury. His most valuable work was the *Acts of the English Martyrs*, written in conjunction with Father John Gibbon, S.J., and incorporated into Bridgewater's *Concertatio*. For the nuns of Syon he wrote a work called *Spiritual Treatises collected from English Writers*. He also translated into English the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, *the Life of St Catharine of Siena*, and various other works, and translated from English into Latin two of Cardinal Fisher's works. He was ordained priest in Italy, where he studied for four years, and returning thence to Flanders, was for a time chaplain, as has been said, in Sir William Stanley's regiment. The large part he had in the founding of St Monica's is minutely related by the chronicler.

On 22nd October 1611, the Rev. Stephen Barnes arrived at St Monica's, and thenceforward for forty-two years filled the office of chaplain till his death on 1st January 1653. He was born at Salisbury, admitted to the English College in Rome in October 1596, and ordained priest in 1601, at the age of twenty-one. In May 1605, he went on the English Mission. In the Louvain Records I read: "Being sent from thence (Rome) priest and missionary into England, he spent four years in the exercise of his functions, and four at Douay College, where he was one while Procurator, then Confessor, then Reader of Divinity." (In reality he passed some time at Douay both before and after his missionary life in England.) "He was a man of a very peaceful disposition, patient in suffering, conformable to the will of God, and charitably turning all things to good. After he had been nineteen years ghostly Father, feeling himself grow in years, he procured to have a sociate to assist in the masses, confessions, etc., to which end he procured from Douay College Mr Richard Johnson (*vere* White), priest and student, who came hither in May of the year

1630. He lies buried in the broad side of the cloister, before St Nicholas's Altar, under a stone of about 3 feet in length, for a greater he would not have."

The Rev. Stephen Barnes had some half-brothers of the name of Barber. To one of these, Mr John Barber, the writer of our MS. says, "he left a fair gold ring, to his wife a great gold cross and a jewel." To another of his half-brothers, the Rev. Francis Barber, a priest at Douay, he addressed the letter from which Bishop Challoner copied the account of the capture and martyrdom of the Venerable Eustachius White. The original of this letter is in the possession of our Canonesses. I here subjoin the first part of the letter, omitted by Challoner :—

"To the Rev. Mr Francis Barber, in the English College at Douay.

"By the enclosed you may perceive I have received of late a letter from our brother George. Although it were long coming, it is dated from Winchester, where it seems he then was. How to send him again I do not know but by your means, and if you can send it by way of Winchester or any other, I pray read it, seal it, and send it. The contents were to certify me of my brother Simon's death, and of his wife, and that there is something thereby fallen into my hands, which if there be I do not know how to claim unless I were present, being but for my life; and if I were present I could not appear, and therefore I must account it lost. My answer to him by this you may understand to be the same as before to my brother William, which you sent. The copies of Mr Fortescue's letter I have sent in to our Reverend Mother, with whom I could not speak by reason of her sickness, and therefore what she sayeth to it I know not." The letter is dated 22nd December 1632, at which time Father Barnes had a brother at Winchester. In 1598, Mr Robert Barnes, a Hampshire recusant, was condemned to death for harbouring the Venerable John Jones, O.S.B., who, according to Father Pollen, is probably the author of the account of the martyrdom at Winchester of the Venerables John Slade and Richard Bodey. Was the Rev. Stephen Barnes a relative of this Mr Robert Barnes? The latter was pardoned and released in 1603, but in 1610 a "grant of the recusancy of Robert Barnes" was made to one Augustine Griggs.

Prioress Wiseman, in the year 1613, welcomed to St Monica's a holy priest and confessor of the faith whom she must have known in childhood. The Rev. John Bolt was born of good family, at Exeter, about 1563, and for his musical skill in the service of the royal chapel was so high in favour with Elizabeth, an excellent judge in such matters, that when one day he was found to have disappeared from Court, "she would have flung her slipper" at the chapel-master's head for vexation, and even went the length of offering to overlook his conversion and allow him to remain a Catholic if he would return. He refused, and for some time taught music in Catholic families—as at Sir John Petre's at Thorndon, Mr Verney's in Warwickshire, etc., and was finally domiciled with the Wisemans of Braddocks. Arrested in March 1593-4, with William Wiseman, at the house in Golden Lane, and threatened by Topcliffe with torture, he owed his life to the vigorous intercession of the fair and frail Penelope Rich, one of the many occasions that served to redeem in part her tarnished fame, and earn for her the grace of a good death. In an earlier MS. of our *Chronicle*, I find that after studying for some years at St Omer's, he stayed three years with the Benedictine Nuns at Brussels, "to help their music, which hath been so famous"; was persuaded by them to be a priest, and was received as a novice at St Gregory's Monastery. His health failing, he gave up the idea of Benedictine life, and for a time lived as a secular priest in the Cambray diocese. He had been ordained priest at Douay College in 1605. His examination after his arrest is specially interesting. He acknowledges as his own, and in his own handwriting, a book bound in parchment, containing the *Jesus Psalter* (by Richard Whytford, monk of Syon); also as his property a MS. poem (Father Southwell's) called *St Peter's Complaint*, "but by whom written he knoweth not, but borrowed it of Mr Wiseman"; also "a little paper book containing matter of Campion . . . and that he wrote the same with his own hand, and copied it out of another book which he borrowed of one Henry Souche"; as also a book called *Why do I use my Paper, Pen, and Ink?* by Father Henry Walpole. Of Father Bolt's gifts of nature and grace, Father Gerard, who had given him the spiritual exercises while at his Suffolk residence, writes: "Great talents for music had won him the warmest love of a very powerful man. He spurned this love, and all worldly hopes, to attach himself to me, and lent his ear to the counsel of Christ in the spiritual exercises." On 3rd August 1640, Father Bolt ended his long and chequered career, dying at St Monica's, after having been for five years almost bedridden. Though seventy-seven years old, "he looked yet young and fresh. . . . He had always loved holy poverty, and served us here, in the music and teaching our Sisters, twenty-eight years, without taking any pension, contenting himself with only meat and drink, and such clothes as we gave him," writes the chronicler.

The Rev. John Redman, D.D., is mentioned in the *Chronicle*, though he was not one of the chaplains, concerning whom Mr Gillow has kindly sent the following details:— "A native of Yorkshire, according to Dodd, but apparently of the diocese of Chester, according to the Douay Diaries, where there are two or more of the name about the same period. He studied at Rheims and Douay, and was ordained priest in 1549. He matriculated at the University in that year, became B.D. in 1601, and subsequently D.D. He left the University in 1601, in order to teach divinity in a monastery of Regular Canons at Bethune. Afterwards, he became a canon of the Cathedral of St Omer, where he died, 29th September 1617. He was an intimate friend of

Dr Kellison, President of Douay, who attended him in his last sickness. He bequeathed his library to Douay College, besides a third part of his estates. He was a nephew of Mother Margaret Clement. He was author of a work against Roger Widdrington. You say he was cousin to the two sisters Copley. If so, he may have belonged to the Yorkshire family of Redman."

From our Records, it appears that Dr Redman was the son of Robert Redman by Bridget Clement, his wife, sister to Mother Margaret Clement. Robert and Bridget Redman are mentioned in a deed of 1572, by which, in accordance with the will of John Clement, M.D., they had to pay a certain sum to Mother Margaret. Dodd says he was born in Yorkshire, and he adds one more to the noble group connected with the family of Blessed Thomas More, who figure so conspicuously in the early history of St Monica's.

Before entering on the history of the Wiseman family, a few brief notes in connection with Sisters Catharine Tremaine and Frances Herbert, professed respectively in 1597 and 1598, may find a place here.

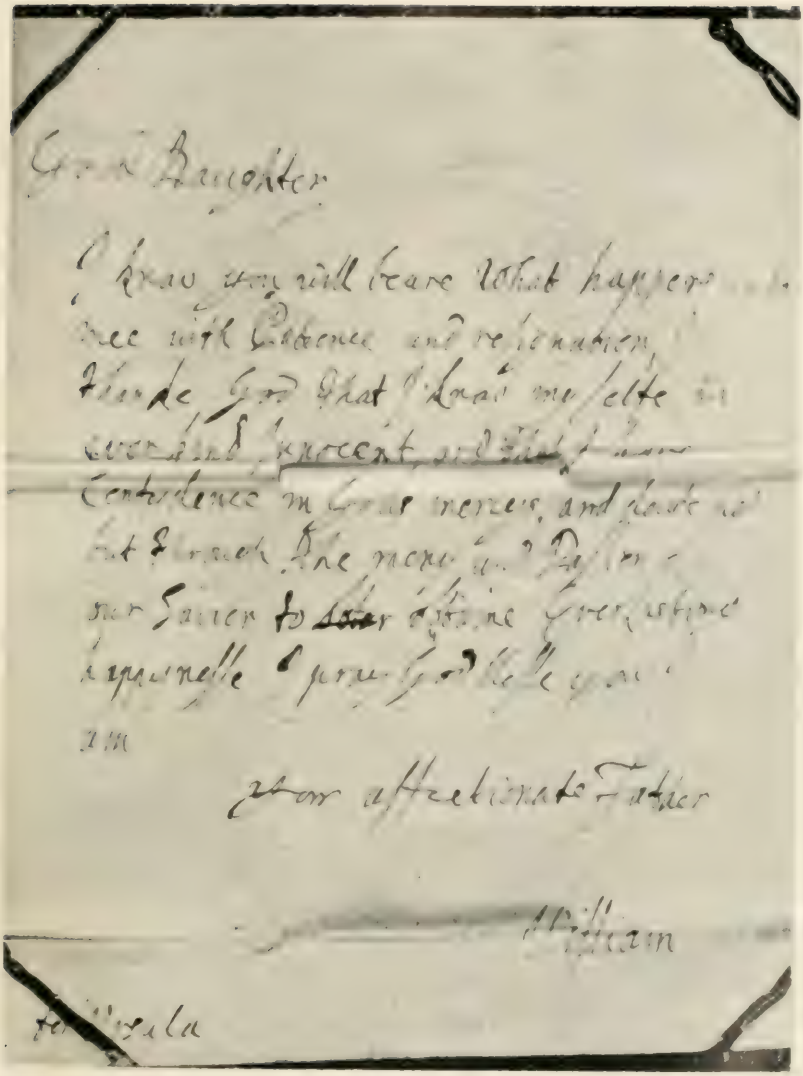
Sisters Catharine, Margaret, and Anne Tremaine were daughters of a Cornish family on whom had fallen the storm of persecution in all the bitterness of its fury. Sister Anne Tremaine, professed at St Ursula's in 1601, was the daughter of Sampson Tremayne and of Margaret, daughter and heiress of Downing of Tredowan. Sampson Tremain was for thirty years a prisoner for the faith. One of his children, a half-brother of our Sister Anne, was John Tremaine, S.J. He was received into the Society on his deathbed, and died the death of a saint at the English College in Rome, 8th August 1615. He was born in Dorset, probably at Chidcock. Sampson Tremaine's brother Henry, by his wife Mary Prideaux, was the father of Philip, Jane, and Richard, all three indicted at Launceston, at the assizes in 1577, together with Blessed Cuthbert Mayne, and that most glorious confessor, Francis Tregian. Richard Tremaine and his companions were brought to trial "for more despite in their hose and doublets, their upper garments stript," to the bar, charged with aiding and abetting the Blessed Martyrs. This Richard Tremaine (of Tregonen, in the parish of St Ewe) was sentenced with Francis Tregian (according to Dr Oliver) to perpetual imprisonment. His sister was indicted as a recusant only. Our two Sisters, Margaret and Catharine, were the daughters of this noble confessor of the faith, by his wife Jane Coffin. Sampson Tremaine seems to have had transferred the family residence to Chidcock in Dorset, for several of the family are mentioned among those who used to hear Mass at Chidcock House, when it was served by the holy martyr, Father John Cornelius, S.J., and a Mrs Tremain died a prisoner in Dorchester jail in 1588. What were the sufferings in prison of Richard Tremaine and the others indicted with the blessed proto-martyr of the Seminary priests, is thus told by a contemporary: "When six, as I ween, or eight Catholics were shovelled together and piled in one hole, though they were of good calling and for the more part gentlemen, yet had they neither meat (food) given them nor allowed them, other than unsavoury and loathsome; yea, and begged of alms from door to door; nor use of any water but of corrupt and filthy . . . (here I omit a detail too loathsome for repetition). But of all others this exceeded, that when these poor wretches began at last to complain of this inhuman and savage cruelty, the jailor threatened them further that he would from thenceforth tie them to mangers and feed them like brute beasts. Yet in the end, by long wit and continued soliciting of friends, it came to pass that they were removed from the prison to London, almost 200 miles thence, with a common guard. Of which pilgrimage this was the ceremony and circumstances: Every one of them was set on a seely, lean and bare horse, without bridle, spur, or other furniture for a horseman; the horses were fastened each one to other's tail, marching in a long row one after another. Each man's feet were tied under his horse's belly, and his arms were bound hard and fast behind him. When they came near to any city or town, one was appointed to ride before and to give warning to the inhabitants that there were coming at hand certain papists, foes to the Gospel, and enemies to the common weal. Upon which notice, the people being stirred up did run in flocks forth of their houses into the streets and welcome the comers with as spiteful contumelies as they could."

Sister Frances Herbert's father was the second son of William, first Earl of Pembroke, one of the executors of Henry VIII., who married Anne Parr, so that Sister Herbert's great-aunt was the intensely Protestant Queen Catharine Parr, who so narrowly escaped being beheaded by her royal spouse for her religious belief. Sister Frances's brother, first Lord Powis, was the great-grandfather of Lady Lucy Herbert, who took the name of Teresa Joseph in religion, and died Prioress of the Canonesses at Bruges in 1744. Both her parents, the Marquess of Powis and his wife Elizabeth, daughter of the Marquess of Worcester, were among the confessors imprisoned at the time of Oates's plot. Sister Teresa Joseph was well known for her piety and her spiritual books, which have been more than once reprinted. The *Bruges Chronicle* bears witness to her admirable gifts of humility and meekness, joined to great strength of character, and ardent devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

A longer notice is due to the family of our first Prioress of St Monica's, Sister Mary Wiseman, who filled that office for twenty-seven years.

"Then was elected for first Prioress of St Monica's, Sister Mary Wiseman," writes our chronicler. Her parents were Thomas Wiseman and Jane Vaughan. With the ancient family that was to give England the first Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, and with an heroic lady of the Vaughan family, to which we owe his successor, the subjoined instalment of the *Chronicle* is concerned.

The family of the Wisemans, represented at this day by



Good Daughter

I know you will beare what happens to
mee with Patience and resignation I
thanke God that I know myselfe in
ever and Innocent, and that I have
Confidence in Gods mercies, and that it is
but through the merits and Passion of
our Saviour to ~~obtr~~ obtaine Everlasting
happinesse I pray God blesse you
I am

your affectionate Father

William

for Ursula

LETTER OF VEN. WILLIAM HOWARD, VISCOUNT STAFFORD.

Written to his Daughter, a Nun at St Monica's, the Day before his Execution.

Photographed from original at St Augustine's Priory.

[*Face page 46.*

Sir William Wiseman, Bart., of Caulfield, Essex, first settled in that county about 1430. Cardinal Wiseman, as Mr Ward tells us, claimed descent, through the Irish branch, from Sir John Wiseman, Auditor of the Exchequer in the reign of Henry VIII. At the time of our story, the Wisemans possessed two estates in Essex. Their ancestral home, called Billocks, was at Northend in the parish of Great Waltham, and John Wiseman of Felsted, the father of Thomas above mentioned, had in 1551 come into possession of a noble estate, with a moated manor-house, known as Broad Oaks or Braddocks, two miles from Wimbish. How Thomas Wiseman became the husband of Jane Vaughan, who was sought in marriage by thirty suitors, I leave our chronicler to tell. Four sons and four daughters were born to this saintly couple. Their eldest son, Sir William Wiseman, knighted at a later date, "a man more of heaven than of this world," inherited his father's estate, and married the daughter of Sir Edmund Huddlestone; two other sons, Thomas and John, entered the Society of Jesus, and died in the flower of their youth; Robert, the remaining son, fell in battle against the Dutch Calvinists in Flanders, fighting when all around him had surrendered. The tomb of the last Wiseman of Braddocks, killed in a duel in 1680, may be seen in Wimbish Church. Of the four daughters of Thomas Wiseman and Jane Vaughan, Jane and Bridget professed among our Louvain Canonesses; Anne and Barbara were successively Abbesses of the Bridgettine community of Syon, then in exile at Lisbon. The two Bridgettines had already left the world for the cloister before the arrival at their paternal home of Father John Gerard, S.J., to whose priceless autobiography, published by the late Father Morris, I am deeply indebted in my work.

So fierce had been the storm of persecution in the county of Essex that few Catholics had been left, save of the higher class. The families of Wright, Kemp, Huddlestone, Crowley, and many another, had seen the greater part of their estates made over to the parasites of a profligate Court in punishment of their recusancy. Braddocks was admirably suited as a refuge for hunted priests, and many found shelter from the storm with Mr Thomas Wiseman. This brave old confessor of the faith united the pursuits of an English country gentleman to an almost monastic rule of life. His daughter's childish reminiscence of the Latin discourse which she had to listen to every Friday from her father, who insisted on all his children being familiar with the language of the Church, shows that he was one of many who walked in the footsteps of Blessed Thomas More.

His wife, Jane Vaughan (I find the name indifferently spelt Vachan or Vagham in those days), survived him many years, and is the celebrated "Widow Wiseman" of the records of Elizabethan persecution. Her exact parentage I have not yet found; our Chronicle only says that her father was "of an ancient family in Wales, and her mother of the blood royal." The same phrase, with the claim of royal descent, probably through alliance with the Herberts, Cornwalls, and other families, occurs in the *Pontoise Chronicle*, in the account of Dame Clare Vaughan, O.S.B., of Courtfield. This circumstance, and the connection of the Vaughans of Courtfield with our Canonesses, make me suspect that the Widow Vaughan was herself not unconnected with that house. (From a MS. in our records we learn that her mother's maiden name was Tudor.) Clare Vaughan, born in 1638, and professed a Benedictine at Pontoise at the age of nineteen, was a relative of Prioress Throckmorton of St Monica's. She was the daughter of Richard Vaughan of Courtfield, born in 1601, by his first wife, Bridget Wigmore. His second wife was the heroic Agatha Berington. Of this lady it is recorded, that when Father James Richardson, who was acting as chaplain at Courtfield in 1688, was in hiding for his life, she would not confide the knowledge of his hiding-place even to the Catholic domestics, but alone, through the depths of woods beset by hostile soldiers, fearless in her trust in God, would at midnight take him the necessary provisions for his maintenance. The account of his daughter Clare's holy life at Pontoise occupies six pages of the MS. preserved at St Scholastica's Abbey, Teignmouth, in the handwriting of Lady Abbess Neville, daughter of the Earl of Abergavenny, who only survived Dame Clare two years. Richard Vaughan died at the age of ninety-six. His grandson, another Richard, was obliged for his loyalty to the Stuart dynasty to take refuge in Spain after the battle of Culloden, was a General in the Spanish army, and by his marriage with a Spanish lady, became the ancestor, not only of many priests and religious (among whom a late Prioress of our community), but of the Bishop of Plymouth, the late Archbishop of Sydney, and the late Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster. What further inclines one to think that the Widow Wiseman whose daughters professed at Louvain was either a Vaughan of Courtfield or closely related to that branch of the family, is the fact that three of the Courtfield Vaughans were Canonesses at Bruges, a filiation made from St Monica's in 1629. These were Sister Mary Teresa Vaughan, professed in 1687, and Sisters Mary Joseph and Teresa Austin Vaughan, who professed together on the 13th of June 1709. From the *Bruges Chronicle* I learn that the father of the two last lived to over a hundred years. When Sister Teresa Austin was on the point of taking the habit, he sent for her to England. As soon as they came in sight of home, he said: "Now, Miss Vaughan, you see Courtfield; will you go there or return to Bruges?" the young lady instantly turned her horse's head to go back, but was not allowed. After some time spent in the world, she was permitted to return, and was a most fervent religious.

To return to the Wisemans; Widow Wiseman's house at Northend was repeatedly invaded by the pursuivants, and the inmates committed to prison. How she herself was arrested, condemned to be pressed to death in 1598, and kept in prison till the accession of James I., is told by our chronicler. Her son William, after his father's death, at first strove to lead an undisturbed life. In comfort and independence, surrounded by a family whom he tenderly loved, he increased the beauty of his estate by a large deer-park; and though the family daily had the consolation of hearing Mass, yet as he only gave shelter to the old tolerated Marian priests, he was left in tranquillity and unmolested by the fury of persecution. All this changed soon after the arrival of Father Gerard; the Jesuit's presence kindled a holy fire that soon made itself felt in the neighbourhood, and the result was, of course, to arouse the heroism of the master of the house. A singular event of this time ought not to be here omitted.

History, romance, and scandal have often been busied with the story of the high-born and beautiful, but most disedifying Penelope Devereux, Lady Rich, sister to Robert, Earl of Essex, Elizabeth's prime favourite after the death of Leicester. Her husband, Lord Rich, was the grandson of the infamous Solicitor-General Rich, the legal murderer of Blessed Thomas More. In early life Penelope had been contracted to Sir Philip Sidney. By a sentence of the Ecclesiastical Courts she separated from her husband, and was married to Charles Blount, Earl of Devonshire, the rite being performed by William Laud, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. In four months the Earl died of a broken heart. The unhappy Penelope at once disappeared from Court, and was never again seen in public. Despite her guilt and disgrace, something attractive has always surrounded her memory on account of her known kindness of heart, especially to the distressed and afflicted, even in her days of sin and shame. The holy Widow Wiseman visited her in her quiet Essex home; by Father Gerard's influence and discourse her heart was changed, and what was long unknown to her biographers is now revealed to us in his autobiography. The poor penitent found rest at last, and before her death Penelope Devereux was received into the Catholic Church "by one of ours," writes Father Gerard. The tragic end of her gallant brother, whose strange career is thought by some to have made him the original of Shakespeare's Hamlet, had no doubt helped to wean her from the world.

The sentence of pressing to death, known as the *peine forte et dure*, was, as our chronicler has told us, passed on the Widow Wiseman (Jane Vaughan) on the 3rd of July 1598, in company with Mr Barnes, sentenced to be hanged for relieving a priest. Challoner gives the name of the latter as Barnet. Both were reprieved by Queen Elizabeth, but kept in prison till the accession of James I. The charge against Mrs Wiseman was that she had given the priest "a French crown." The priest in question was the Venerable Griffith Jones, *alias* Buckley, *alias* Godfrey Maurice, which last was his religious name. He was a Welshman of good family, from Clenock in Carnarvonshire, and a Franciscan friar, and won his crown of martyrdom on the 12th of the same month at St Thomas Watering's, orders having been given that he should be executed at seven o'clock in the morning, in order that few persons should see him. He seems to have been one of the old Marian priests, a friend of Cardinal Allen's, and on that account was for many years unmolested. But, in 1582, we find him a prisoner in the Marshalsea, again at liberty in 1586, and in the following year confined with other priests in Wisbeach Castle. Thence he was released in 1590, a couple of years before the deplorable discord broke out among the imprisoned confessors, crossed the sea to France, and took the habit of St Francis at Pontoise.

After this we find him for three years in the Ara Cœli convent of his Order in Rome. A halo of sanctity seems to have always surrounded him, and at his leaving Rome for the English Mission, Clement VIII. embraced him, called him a true son of St Francis, and besought his prayers. His first asylum in London, in 1693, was in the house established by Father Gerard, S.J., under the care of Mrs Anne Line, the martyr, as a refuge for priests. Then followed three years of missionary life, and two more in prison. It was during the former three that Mrs Wiseman had the happiness of succouring her saintly countryman, for both were natives of gallant Wales. Some words spoken by the martyr on the scaffold explain the drift of the words of Mrs Wiseman, when she refused to plead, as told in the *Chronicle*, lest the jury should be compelled to return a verdict against the facts.

"Then standing up, he declared upon his salvation, that neither Mr Barnes nor Mrs Wiseman had ever given him one penny in silver. Topcliffe answered: But gold they did give you. He replied quickly: Nor yet gold. He further protested that he had not said Mass in their presence. Topcliffe exclaimed: No, for they were public prayers, there being no super-altar. Father Buckley (Jones) replied: There are no such things, Master Topcliffe; neither did I say any public prayers at all in their hearing." The fiendish Topcliffe harassed him savagely to the last; but the crowd would not allow the usual butchery to begin till he was quite dead, to the disappointment of the priest-catcher.

To return to William Wiseman at Braddocks; from the arrival of Father Gerard he was incessantly worried by the pursuivants, his noble wife, Jane Huddlestone, bearing her full share of their sufferings. After Father Gerard's arrival, instead of confining his hospitality to the unmolested Marian clergy, we find him reported to the Lord Keeper Puckering as "a continual receiver of Seminary priests," and that both Fathers John Gerard and Henry Garnett were at Braddocks.

A traitor, one John Frank, not a Catholic, though often employed in the service of the family from whom he received many kindnesses, put himself into communication with the hoary villain, Topcliffe. On 26th December 1593, the Widow Wiseman's house of Northend was invaded by the pursuivants, just as all was ready for beginning Mass. Though the priest escaped, the holy widow and her son Robert were arrested and sent prisoners to London. Among others in the house at the time are the names of Mrs Anne Wiseman, widow, and Mary Wiseman her daughter, with another Mary Wiseman, daughter to Mr George Wiseman of Upminster, in the Commission of the Peace, and many others; in short, a large houseful of Catholic guests had assembled to celebrate the Christmas festivities, and had heard the three Christmas Masses and received Holy Communion the day before. William Wiseman was arrested in a house he had hired in Golden Lane in London. His arrest was on the 17th or 18th of March 1594, and he was at once examined before Sir Edward Coke and others. Father Gerard, whom the priest-catchers hoped to have apprehended there, instantly returned to Braddocks.

The blood-hounds, thrown off the scent for a moment, were not long at fault. Holy Week and Easter Sunday had been kept by the pious household there as Christmas Day had been at Northend, with all holy rites. Easter Monday in 1594 fell on 1st April. Rumours of danger had arrived the day before, and before daylight the altar was dressed and the priest on the point of vesting, when the tramp of horses and the loud shouts of armed men thundering at the door announced the hour of peril. Quick as lightning, priest, altar furniture, vestments, and books were huddled into a hiding-place made under a fireplace, the movable floor being lifted up and let down again. At the same moment the door of the house crashed under the pursuivants' blows, and they rushed upstairs. The lady of the house and her daughters were thrust into her bedroom and locked in; the Catholic servants locked up in another room. The house was now searched from garret to cellar, candles lit in dark places, walls hammered, measured, the roof examined, wainscoting torn off; the search lasting two whole days, but all to no purpose. On the afternoon of the second day, the magistrates left in despair; but the lady of the house having incautiously let the traitor into part of the secret, they were recalled by Frank the next morning, and another two days' fruitless search began, during which the hot coals from the fire lit by the night-watchers fell into Father Gerard's hiding-place, who was listening to their conversation. But even as at Northend, the priest was in the house all the time of the search, so it was at Braddocks. The hunted Jesuit's hour was not yet come. After four days' search the pursuivants left, and Father Gerard, half dead with hunger, came forth from his tomb; his hostess, Mrs Wiseman (not the Widow Wiseman), was so changed by suffering that he could only recognise her by her voice and dress. After rest and refreshment, Father Gerard rode to London, and found shelter with the Countess of Arundel. His arrest, torture, and escape from the Tower in company with Mr Arden, Shakespeare's relative, are told in his autobiography. William Wiseman obtained his release by money and Court influence; the Widow Wiseman was, four years later, condemned to death as already related. At the accession of James I. this much-harassed family obtained a short breathing time of liberty and peace. It was probably during this interval that William Wiseman was knighted.

In the year 1635 our Chronicle records the profession of Sister Mary Wiseman. It only records concerning her family that she was the Prioress's cousin, and daughter to "Sir Thomas Wiseman of a place in Essex"; that her father had followed the time by apostacy; but that her mother, being a Roper and cousin to Sir Anthony Roper, had been reconciled, and on her deathbed obtained a promise from Sir Thomas that the child should be placed in Mr Roper's household, and brought up a Catholic. This was done, and at the age of eight years she was sent as a scholar to St Monica's. There she professed at the age of eighteen. She had been christened Penelope, but at her confirmation took the name of Mary.

The heroic Widow Wiseman (Jane Vaughan) died in 1610. In the year 1614, Laurence Blundeston, a student of the English College in Rome, whose mother was Margaret, daughter of Richard Wiseman, Esq., of Flingrige, in Essex, tells a sad story. His parents had indeed returned to the faith, and five of his brothers were Catholics, but, he adds, "all my maternal uncles and aunts are Protestants, except one, Sir William Wiseman, of Braddocks, Essex." The family had yielded to persecution, and Mr Ward tells us that Cardinal Wiseman claimed descent from Capel Wiseman, Protestant Bishop of Dromore, the third son of another Sir William Wiseman. The Cardinal's grandfather, however, was a Catholic merchant of Waterford, who migrated to Spain in the eighteenth century. It is pleasing to record the union of the families of Wiseman and Vaughan in the days of Elizabeth; but, not having at hand a pedigree of either, I could give only an incomplete notice. Francis Wiseman, of Essex, was ordained priest in Rome, and sent on the English Mission in 1637. Richard Wiseman adhered to the royal fortunes during the Civil War, and was made prisoner at the battle of Worcester; Sir Robert Wiseman was Judge Advocate-General in the reign of Charles II.

In Father Morris's *Troubles*, Foley's *Records*, S.J., and Mrs Hope's *Franciscan Martyrs*, I have found most of the authorities for the above account of the Wiseman family. What the Louvain chronicler adds to them is of the deepest interest.

Concerning Sister Barbara Wilford, who professed in 1595 and died in 1618, I need only add to the chronicler's account that though the principal seat of the family was at Quendon, in Essex, yet her father, Thomas, son of Sir James Wilford of Newman Hall, lived at Hartridge, in Kent, and married Mary, the daughter of Humphrey Browne. Agnes Wilford, Barbara's sister, married John Throckmorton, and these were the parents of Mother Prioress Throckmorton, of whom more hereafter.

CHAPTER II

FROM THE RESIGNATION OF MOTHER MARGARET CLEMENT TO THE FOUNDATION OF A SEPARATE ENGLISH COMMUNITY AT ST MONICA'S, 1606-1609.

THE old Mother Clement was also desirous of the same (to elect as Prioress an Englishwoman). This was their determination, but Almighty God, whose counsels are above human understanding, ordained this design should be crossed by the Visitors, who had doubtless some good intention therein, although to outward judgment their proceedings seemed strange. For, the new election being made, two were chosen, the one English, and the other Dutch, who at the present was Sub-Prioress. The English was Sister Mary Wiseman, who had twenty-five voices, and the Dutch but seven. Notwithstanding, this latter was accepted, and the other rejected, in respect, as they said, that she had not the full years of the Council of Trent, which commands that a Superior should be of forty years at her election, which years the Dutchwoman had.

So the English lost their election, which they could hardly brook, being persuaded by most of their friends that they had great wrong, and therefore counselled them to appeal unto Rome,* offering to assist them therein. Which first they thought good to let the Visitors know, who took the matter very ill, and flatly denied to grant their request, with grievous chapters and threatenings of excommunica-

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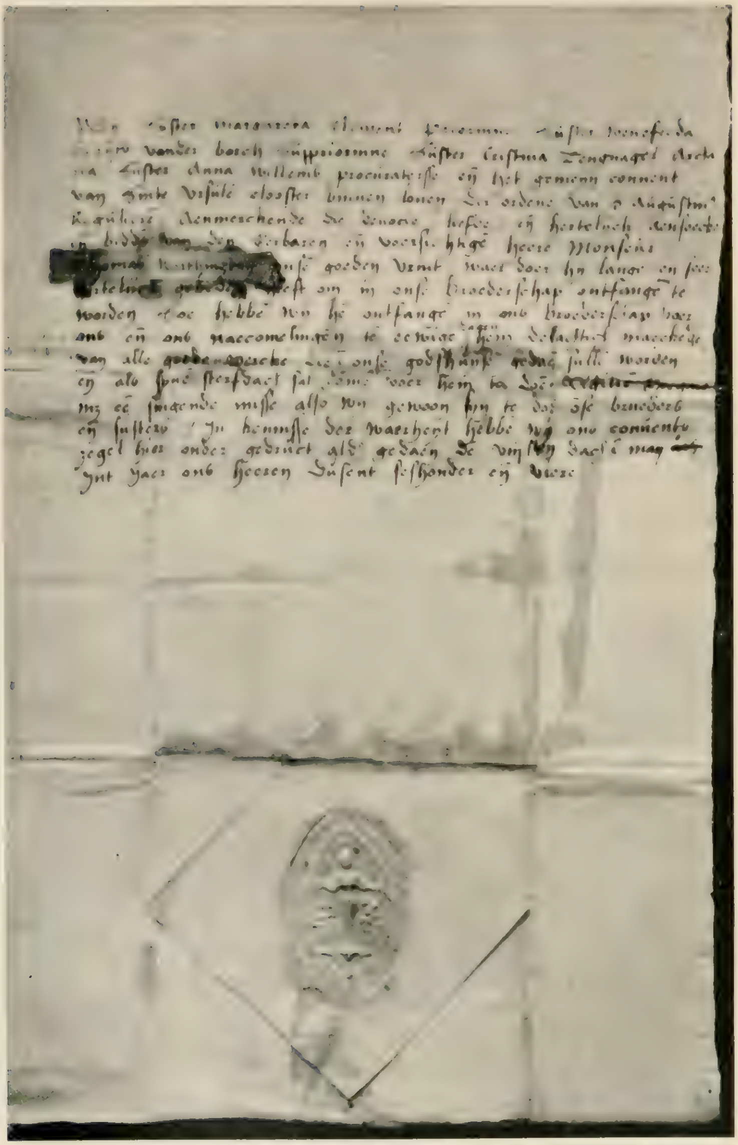
* Always spelt *Room* in MS., according to the old pronunciation.



DEED IN FLEMISH OF ST URSULA'S, LOUVAIN.

Showing the only Copy known to exist of the Seal of that Monastery, wherein Mother Margaret Clement made her Profession, and of which she was the Prioress.

Photographed from Original at St Augustine's Priory.

Face page 57.

tion from the Archbishop, which was a great terror unto the hearts of the English, being so desolate with the former affliction. Yet, their English friends still animating them not to give it over, but to appeal to the Chair of Rome, to that end, they drew up a form of petition, unto which they were all to set their hands. Which being first brought to the old Reverend Mother, she flatly denied to do it, saying that for her part she could stand to the censure of her superiors, and would seek no further; whereupon all the rest likewise gave it over. So the Dutch Mother was confirmed without any contradiction, and the English was made Sub-Prioress. Almighty God would have it so, as it afterwards appeared, for if the English Superior had been accepted, they would not have sought a separation, and our cloister of St Monica's perhaps had never been erected. For the present it may be supposed that their minds were not wholly quiet, although they bore it patiently and showed themselves friendly to each other for the maintaining of peace and concord. Notice was given to the Bishop that matters were quieted, and that they had all vowed obedience unto the new Mother. But he, having been before incensed against the English for their supposed repugnance, commanded they should all together come before the Visitors, and every one in particular should acknowledge her fault, and ask forgiveness. It may well be imagined how this went against their hearts, thinking with themselves that they had the wrong; except only the good old Mother, whose manner was to turn all things to the best. The Visitors then being sent for, and they coming before them, the old Mother was to begin; which she did with such humility and submission, that all the rest were confounded, and none of them could do the like, some for weeping, and many of their hearts being so full, could scarce bring forth their words. And, after this was done, one of the nuns said to her: "O dear Mother, how could you acknowledge your fault with such a courage, we having had such manifest wrong?" She answered sweetly: "No, child, I take it for no wrong, but from the hand of Almighty God, whose Blessed Will it is, and I do easily submit my will thereunto, for we have no surer token to know the Will of God, but by our superiors; and although they should do otherwise than right, yet be assured that God will defend our cause, if we put our whole confidence in Him, for He hath otherwise foreseen than we can imagine." By which we may be perceived how conformable she was to God's Will, and how great her submission to superiors, which Almighty God accepted of so well as to turn it unto a greater good than if they had contended for justice to men's seeming upon their side; and may teach us hereafter how good it is to keep peace and concord in religious houses, whatsoever occasions happen. For there assuredly will God pour a double benediction, as it plainly appeared by that which ensued after these said things.

The Dutch Prioress, whose name was Sister Winifred Garrett, being established in her office upon St Andrew's day of the said year 1606, the English lived peaceably under her government the space of above two years, for she was, to speak the truth, a woman of great virtue, wise and discreet, both well experienced in temporal matters, and also much given to prayer and devotion. For she had lived before her entry into the monastery with Doctor Jansonius, who had brought both her and her brother (at that time Visitor) out of Holland, and she being a housewifely woman, kept his house. Now, although she was kind to the English, yet in respect that the Benedictines at Brussels had been erected some few years, those who came out of England sought rather to go into an English monastery than to St Ursula's. So they plainly perceived they should hardly increase if they remained among the Dutch nation; wherefore, to the greater honour and glory of God, some of them consulted together about getting leave to depart thence, and to erect an English monastery in the same town. They moved this design unto the old

Mother, who liked very well thereof; and withal agreed to be one of the first herself. Although she was blind and aged, nevertheless her desire to promote a work so much to God's glory made her willingly consent thereto; this animated the others much, and gave them courage to proceed in their determination.

The names (of those) that would undertake this enterprise were: Sister Catharine Allen, who had her mother and brother-in-law living in the town, ready to assist in the matter; the other was Sister Elizabeth Shirley, who, having had in the world experience of temporal things, was the more willing to lend her helping hand thereto. But as yet they knew not of temporal means to compass so great a business. Nevertheless, they agreed together to see if they could obtain their Superior's liking therein, to wit, the Dutch Mother, that by her means they might obtain both the Visitor's and the Bishop's consent; and withal they thought to propose it to the Procuratrix of the Cloister, as supposing, for to lighten the burden of the House, which was in great poverty, she would be glad to be rid of them. Which indeed proved so; for she was very willing to consent unto that design, as also the Mother, seeing that they desired a thing both to God's honour and the good of her monastery, promised to assist them all she could, if so be they procured means out of England to be able to live in any reasonable sort. Hereupon they wrote unto their friends, and some four of them obtained the grant of some £10 a year or more. She that had her friends in the town (Sister Allen) obtained £8 a year of her mother, besides her help and assistance in all that she could unto this new work. Moreover they were promised out of England £500 to begin the cloister withal, of a Catholic gentleman who in his will determined to leave so much unto pious uses, which their friends sought to get for them in this their beginning.

They, then, thinking themselves sure hereof, intended to buy a house therewith, and so gave a certificate of all unto the Bishop, notifying to him also the Mother's good will thereunto. And Mr Worthington, brother-in-law unto Sister Allen, did earnestly solicit the business with the Bishop, offering himself to be bound in all that he was worth for their maintenance, so great was his charity. There also joined with them a R. Priest, Father John Fenn, who, having long lived in these countries, was very well esteemed and accounted of, especially of the Archbishop, they having been conversant together in their youth; for this good priest was in former times chaplain-major in Sir William Stanley's regiment, and in his later years left that place and came to St Ursula's, to live there a more recollected life in the Father's house, saying the first Mass every morning.

But when the English proposed their design, he (Father Fenn) was very willing and ready to help them, offering to go with them to be their Father. He was content to serve them for nothing, and even to pay for his own board, if need required, and that they were not able to maintain a ghostly Father. This liked the Bishop, and, moreover Dr Jansonius (at the request of the Mother) solicited him in the business, whereupon the Archbishop consented, and gave commission to the said Dr Jansonius to come to St Ursula's, and to impose the charge of procuring the setting forward of the new cloister to Sister Elizabeth Shirley, who had the best friends, that she should labour in the affairs of the new House, and that what she did should stand for the rest. Matters hitherto had gone very secret, but now there was no remedy, they must be known in the cloister, for the same afternoon the Mother called together the Council-sisters and discharged Sister Shirley of her office, being at that present Vestiaria, declaring unto them the reason, because the Bishop had imposed on her this other charge. Hereupon began crosses and troubles to arise (as all great enterprises commonly have many difficulties). For, first, in the same monastery began commotion; some were willing hereunto and some were unwilling, saying that the English did this out of disgust; others, that now when they had spent what they brought, they would depart, and leave them in greater misery than before, by reason that the alms of the English helped them. Hearing also that the old Mother would be one of them, they were the more incensed; but the English appeased what they could, saying: They need not to trouble themselves, for there was no means to effect it, only they might let them try; and such other things, so that with good words and reasons they quieted most part of them.

The Procuratrix of the new monastery, Sister Shirley, was diligent to perform her office imposed by the Archbishop, although with a heavy heart, seeing such small means, but she wrote earnestly to all her friends and acquaintance in England, who promised their assistance by making a gathering among Catholics for the end, and the £500 before mentioned they thought was sure. Wherefore she dealt with Mr Worthington to seek them a convenient house in the town to begin the monastery. He was also very forward therein, and at length found out this that is now our cloister, which he judged was fit for the purpose. It belonged to an Abbot, and being religious land, they were the better pleased therewith than if (it had been) a worldly house. So they agreed about the price for £800, being a great house, with a fair orchard belonging to it. The day of payment was appointed, and upon tendering of the first sum the English religious were to have full assurance, and to be put in possession. But herein came another cross, for when they had made shift to get so much money as the first payment required, and sent it to the Abbot, he lay on his deathbed, and could make no assurance thereof. So they were again to seek; yet was not this all their trouble, for many more and greater they passed in this happy enterprise, by reason that those who were before their friends, and of whom they hoped for most assistance, seeing it go thus forward, turned quite contrary.

Sister Shirley, that had the charge of things, went to the old Mother and made her moan when she was in any trouble, and asked counsel what to do, for she knew not what friend to make her recourse unto; it seemed they were wholly forsaken of all. The good Mother counselled her to write to her nephew, Dr Clement, at Brussels, who had the dignity of Vicar-General of the Army, and was Dean of St Gudula's Church, and to commit herself and the whole cause unto him, entreating him to stand their assured friend by his good word and countenance.

She did so, and presently received an answer that he would do them all the good he could, which indeed he performed faithfully. For many times he omitted his own great affairs to assist us, sometimes writing to Rome, sometimes unto England in our behalf, and sometimes coming himself in person to Louvain to persuade our adversaries to become friendly unto us and to assist us. But, to return to this house which was in hand to be bought, they, seeing the Abbot was dead who would have sold it, thought it best to hire the house for the present of an old gentlewoman who had taken it for some years of the Abbot, so they went to hire the greatest part of the house, she reserving the other part for herself to dwell in, and two little parcels besides which she had already let out unto women. She made them pay £30 a year, although she had taken it of the Abbot for £15, and also reserved rooms besides those already mentioned, to herself. When Father Fenn came to see, he found they were the most principal chambers, which might serve for him and to entertain strangers. Whereupon they were forced to agree with the old woman again for to have those rooms, which she would not part withal, unless they gave her more rent, and so they were fain to give her forty shillings a year more. Thereupon she gave them possession of the house, and delivered the keys to Mr Worthington.

Matters being brought thus far, they judged it now time to give notice to the Bishop that they were provided of a house, making humble petition for to have licence that some nuns, which had gotten yearly maintenance of their friends in England, might go forth and begin a new monastery of the same Order in the town, of the English nation. Which petitions being formally written in Latin, they entreated Dr Jansonius to send it up unto the Bishop, which he was contented to do. The copy whereof is this that followeth :—

"RIGHT REVEREND AND MOST ILLUSTRIOUS,

"Your humble and devout children of the English nation, Religious of the Canonesses Regular of St Augustine in Louvain, do expose their request and petition unto your Grace, that whereas the Monastery of St Ursula is replenished with English Religious, and as yet many young maids of the same nation are found who desire to take upon them monastical life, but cannot well be all received, by reason that monasteries erected in these Low Countries ought to be for the most part of the same nation, and therefore some will not admit so many as do offer themselves, these gentlewomen, finding repulse and difficulty, either return to the world, or at least do leave their goodly religious purpose. Others hearing this, having good motions to religion they are not effectually followed. That therefore this detriment may from this time forward have an end, your foresaid children do entreat you, of your pious paternity, that you vouchsafe to give them leave to erect in Louvain a new monastery and convent of Canonesses Regular, to the honour of God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and St Michael Archangel, and St Augustine, to be subject unto the metropolitan See of Mechlin, with the same right as the Monastery of St Ursula is, and with such conditions as your Gracious Paternity shall think good to prescribe, and such persons to go to the new House prepared for that end as you shall choose and call out, who, absolved from their obedience to the Mother of St Ursula's Cloister, may begin a new convent of Canonesses Regular, of English, and may serve God there, with enclosure, and obedience to the Mother to be chosen according to the form of Canonesses Regular, with power to gather together more Englishwomen, either those that are professed elsewhere, or of such as shall desire to come unto them out of the world, as their ability shall serve and the occasion of them that shall offer themselves to this new Monastery shall require.

"And in respect that the diet of the Dutch nation is not so agreeable to the English, nor convenient for their health, your foresaid children do entreat that those who remain in the Monastery of St Ursula, after the others are taken out, may likewise have leave to go to the new Monastery of the English, with leave of the Superior of both Convents, as soon as the new Monastery shall be able to admit them."

Upon this petition they received a formal licence from the Archbishop, under his own name, hand, and seal, who also having occasion to come into the town, came himself in person to St Ursula's, and calling for all them by name who had means to go forth, he absolved them from their obedience to that cloister, and appointed them to go unto the new monastery upon the Tuesday after, which was St Scholastica's day, 1609, it being then Friday. At that time Mr Worthington was very desirous to have one more to go with them, for there were but five that had means, and he would fain that Sister Susan Laborn, which was his kinswoman, might have made the number six. The old Mother also and Sister Shirley were content therewith, hoping that God would assist them to keep one for nothing ;

but the Dutch Mother hearing of this, desired to put forth with them one whom she thought should never be able to get means. Therefore she kneeled down before the Bishop and desired humbly that since they would take one for nothing, she might be the chooser, in respect that she knew one of them had no friends ever to assist her to go, and therefore in charity she could not but speak for her: this was Sister Margaret Garnett. Whereupon the Bishop, and the others that were to go, consented thereto, and she was set down for the sixth. Besides, the old Mother desired of the Bishop, that in respect that they were gentlewomen, and had no handling of work and that they should be forced to take some for to serve them, he would grant that one nun more which had been a servant in the world, might go with them in place of a lay-sister. Her name was Elizabeth Dumford, who had the office of Cellaress at that present in St Ursula's. This the Bishop also accorded unto, so they became seven in number.

After this Sister Shirley, the Procuratrix of the new monastery, went to the Dutch Mother, and humbly desired of her that she would give them something of household stuff to begin withal, for it would be hard for them to buy all by the penny, considering they had scarce wherewith to buy food to live. She answered that she would willingly do it but feared to have disgust of the Congregation, that they might say she trifled away the goods of the monastery. Notwithstanding, she gave her free leave to beg of all the officers in the house, whatsoever thing they could spare to assist them withal, and she would give her leave to take it for so they could not blame her. Besides that, all the habit, bedding, pictures, and other things, which the seven that were to go, had leave to use there, the Bishop had ordained they might freely take with them. Hereupon the Procuratrix was very desirous to have the organs, in respect that they were given to the cloister a little before by an English priest, Mr Pits, who brought Sister Mary Skidmore, to the House, and for her sake, because she could play on them, and had given £30 towards them. But indeed they cost £45 when they came to be bought, so that £15 the cloister was to give if they would have them; which they being backward by reason of their poverty, Sister Shirley offered to pay the said sum, so that they might have them to their new cloister. She had been incited thereto by Sister Mary Skidmore who feared that if the organs stayed behind, they must keep her still there, because they had no other to play on them but she; and contrariwise, if they were gone, those of the new monastery would be glad to send for her afterwards to play on them. Which indeed fell out accordingly, but now at the present there was great difficulty to get them, by reason that some in the house stood very much against it. Nevertheless, the new Procuratrix lost not her courage, but desired Mr Worthington to go about this to Dr Jansonius, to desire him he would speak in their behalf to the Mother that they might have them, for she knew that he for some respects was not willing they should have organs there. This was so done, and he easily consented to it, and sent to the Mother that she should let them go. Any word of his sufficed, for she was much guided by him. So the organs were granted to go with them, though so many were against it.

Upon the Monday also, the new Procuratrix went to all the officers, as the Mother had bid her, to beg something, and some of them were very friendly and some otherwise, as commonly there are both sorts in a community. Beside this the Bishop had ordered that the cloister should allow them a little church-stuff, and some song-books, which they might well do, in respect that when they undertook the Roman Office, all the nuns were provided of books by the charity and contribution of the English, as also the Choir stored with song-books. Wherefore, of five great Mass-books that were given, they allowed them two, and other old song-books, as also some antiphonaries and versicle books. As concerning church-stuff, they gave them one vestment of a kind of gold tissue, which had been given

Sister Grace Nevel, an English nun, as also another yellow silk-wrought, given by Sister Catharine Pigot, with two or three antipendiums and some albs, with other small things which the Sacristan could well spare, and being English, hoping to follow herself, was the more willing to help them. Moreover, Father Fenn, having lent much money unto the cloister, and they not being able to pay him, he was content to take for it the suit of red damask with tunics, given by the two Allens at their profession, as also the silver Monstrance of the Blessed Sacrament, given by Sisters Mary Best and Frances Felton at their profession; all which things scarcely amounted unto the sum which they owed him; notwithstanding, for these things he remitted wholly the debt. Mrs Allen besides had given the white damask hearse-cloth, with that condition that the English should take it with them when they went into England, therefore desired they might have it now with them in this new erection, which was as a fore-passage for England, and this the cloister condescended unto. The new Procuratrix also got of the Refectoress a good portion of pewter, for although she was of the Dutch nation, yet was kind to them and gave them a dozen of pewter-plates, as many porringers, and some dishes with such-like things as she could spare in her office, for they were reasonably well stored. Then she went into the kitchen, into the bake-house and brew-house, and got of the lay-sisters some pots and pans, tubs, and such-like necessary things for housekeeping.

When, therefore, our Procuratrix had gotten what she could among the officers, she showed it all to the Mother of the cloister, who was well content to let her have these things away. So they packed them up against the next day, in which they were to depart, and with all their bedding and habits, and whatever they had in their cells. As also the Procuratrix, having herself been Vestiaria, got leave of the Mother to take away some linen with her, in respect that she left the office much better stored than she had found it, as appeared by the inventory of things. She took therefore a good portion for the new house, with the Mother's consent, and Sister Elizabeth Dumford, having been Cellaress, had leave also for some little things that could be spared in that office. But as for money or victuals, the cloister gave them not one penny, and the new Procuratrix, Sister Shirley, had but only 5s. in her purse, which her friends had sent her for a token, to begin house withal. This she was to give, all and much more, to the waggonmen for the carriage of their baggage to their new house: and the organs being to be carried by men's hands, she was forced to hire eight men, who had each of them 1s. By which may be seen how truly was this the work of God, who with so small a beginning to human judgment, hath made our monastery to be erected, and increased it from time to time.

Upon St Scholastica's day (10th February), in the morning, they were all called to the Chapter-house, both nuns and lay-sisters. Then those that were to depart acknowledged their faults as the manner is, the old Mother beginning first, who spoke so humbly and with such fervour, desired pardon for whatever she might in the time of her government have given them cause for offence, that she made them almost all to weep, and the Dutch Mother also asked of them pardon in behalf of herself and the congregation for whatever they might have disgusted them. After this they heard a singing Mass of Our Blessed Lady, and communicated. So (they) took their leave, but at their parting was much weeping on both sides; especially some were so grieved to part from the old Mother, that for a long time after they could not cease from tears. These our first sisters came forth then out of St Ursula's for to begin this monastery dedicated unto Our Blessed Lady's Conception, to the glorious Archangel St Michael, and to St Monica, mother of our Holy Father St Augustine. Their names were these: first, the Reverend old Mother, Margaret Clement, whom her nephew assisted with maintenance, she being blind; next in profession was Sister Catharine Allen, niece unto Cardinal Allen; the third, Sister Margaret Garnett, sister to the Rev. Father Henry Garnett, Provincial of the Society of Jesus in England; the fourth, Sister Elizabeth Shirley, who had the charge to begin this cloister, and was made both Procuratrix and Superior until the election of a Prioress; she had twenty mark a year allowed her of her friends. The fifth sister, Barbara Wilford, daughter to Thomas Wilford, Esquire, of Essex, who suffered much for his conscience. The sixth, Sister Mary Welsh, niece to Mr Southcote, who allowed her £10 a year. Besides these six, went also Sister Elizabeth Dumford, a veiled nun, for to help them in their household work. They went in the street by two and two in order, having on hukes to make the less show, but notwithstanding the people ran out of their houses to see them, some said they knew the old Mother of St Ursula's who came last led by the Rev. Father Fenn on the one side and Mr Worthington on the other side. They went all, first to St Peter's Church, to visit Our Blessed Lady's picture of miracle there, for so the old Mother had desired leave of the Bishop they might do, and having heard Mass again at St Peter's which Father Fenn said, they thought to have directly from thence to this house, but Mr Worthington led them without their knowledge into his own house, where he had prepared for them a great dinner, such was his joy to receive nuns. They on the other side were much marvelled, thinking to have come to their own cloister, when they saw themselves in his house, but there was no remedy; he had leave of the Bishop, and they must do then as he would have them, for they knew not the way unto their own monastery.

There also met them the Rector of the English College, who had brought with him two great tarts, the one of minced meat, made costly, the other of fruit, very good. These tarts Mrs Allen would not have to be touched there, for they had enough. She sent them before to our own house, and indeed they served our poor sisters for a whole week.*

The said Rector also gave Sister Shirley a little piece of gold of half a crown for an alms to begin house withal, and so they dined together to the great content of Mrs Allen, her son and daughter. After dinner, about two or three of the clock in the afternoon, they came to this house and the first thing they did was to dress the altar in that little chapel which is the gallery above by the dormitories, and then their Rev. Father Fenn hallowed some water, which being done, they sung all together the antiphon of the Blessed Trinity with the collect. Next, *Ave Regina Cælorum* with a collect unto our Blessed Lady; then an antiphon and collect of our Holy Father St Augustine, and lastly an antiphon and collect of St Monica our Patroness.

After this they went to settle in order their bedding and the things which they brought from St Ursula's, accommodating themselves in the rooms which they found as was most convenient for a monastical life. Also, Father Fenn, and their servant Roger, whom Sister Shirley had taken from Mr Worthington to serve our cloister, had their rooms apart, where he placed his library of books, which were many. The Procuratrix had caused Mr Allen

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* A most comical little drawing of the dinner scene at Mr Worthington's done by one of the sisters present, shows their exuberant gaiety in all their troubles. Under it are written a set of verses, too long for insertion. But here is a sample:—

"I leave you to guess our dear Mother's surprise
At finding a table well covered with pies.
Old Mr Worthington played them a trick
And old Father Fenn entered into it quick . . .
They talked of the Convent they're going to found
Tho' alas! in their pockets they had not a pound.
To be Proc. in those days was I'm sure very bad
And many a time has she felt very sad . . .
Though many from friends they'd already bespoken,
Yet promise like pie-crust is made to be broken."

CUTHBERT TUNSTALL, BISHOP OF DURHAM.

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to lay in a barrel of beer aforehand, as also a batch of bread, such as we use now for common bread. At night for their supper they had only every one an egg and bread and butter, but when they came to eat their eggs, they wanted salt with them, having none as yet in the house, which made them good recreation among themselves, to see what a pretty shift they must make.

So soon then as they were a little settled, within a day or two, presently they began to read their Office publicly, and the gallery that joineth the chapel served them for a choir, which is so narrow that when they bowed at *Gloria Patri* their heads did almost meet together. They also sang Mass upon Sundays and holidays, only Our Lady's singing Mass upon Saturday they thought they must omit, because they were so few, and half of them commonly busied in the offices of the house. But good Father Fenn would needs have them to sing that Mass too; yea, he said that if they would not, he would begin to sing it himself, but they were willing enough to strain themselves to honour Our Blessed Lady. The old Mother also could not be content till they had the Blessed Sacrament always in their little chapel, but the Procuratrix could not presently satisfy her herein, by reason that she was not able to buy a lamp and keep it continually burning. Whereupon our Lord provided for Himself and ordained that a good English gentleman, a student in this town, gave 5s. for buying of a lamp, and soon after he, dying, left our cloister the money he had, which was about £10. So then they enjoyed the Blessed Sacrament and no wonder the old Mother had this devotion, for she communicated every day, having leave of the Visitor, in respect of her age and worthy forepassed life.

To Matins they rose at four o'clock in the morning, for they were as yet too few to rise at midnight, but such was their fervour in God's service that they could not be content with one Mass a day. And, there being a poor Irish priest who studied in the town and could not tell where to say his Mass, for he had been refused everywhere, he therefore came here, and was accepted of to say the first Mass. The wine for Masses was that which the tradesmen of the town came and presented to the nuns upon their first coming, for to have their custom, bringing each one a pot or two several times; and they never drank it themselves, but kept it for the Altar, because they were not well able to buy it. Besides this, Almighty God helped them to extend their charity to others; for the Irish Franciscan Friars, beginning thus also their cloister, and not having convenient means to celebrate Mass had desired of the parish church they might say their Masses there; but they denied them, saying they could not allow them candles and wine. So they came hither and desired they might in the morning from six till eleven or twelve say all their Masses, offering to pay for the wine and candles; but they did not, for they were not able. Nevertheless here they continued to say Mass for some small time, till they could accommodate their own cloister thereunto, and thus our sisters had Masses enough.

As concerning their temporal state it was this. Mrs Allen gave to the Procuratrix, Sister Shirley, half a year's board for her daughter, which was £4, and with that they bought such things as of necessity they must have for housekeeping, and had not brought from St Ursula's. Their fare was eggs and white-meat; only for the old Mother and Sister Catharine Allen, she being very sickly, they had some flesh, and thus they continued some time, also against Lent, which soon followed, their coming forth being in February. The old Mother desired the Procuratrix they might be so enclosed, that worldly folks might no more come into the house to them. Wherefore she caused a grate to be made of little wooden rails, parting that room, which is now the children's lower school, in the midst with boards, so that it served both for the worldly folks and for the nuns also.

Almighty God raised friends from time to time unexpected, who assisted them, as about a month after their being here a good Beguine came and offered a piece of money, about an angel, unto the Procuratrix, saying that one had desired her to bestow it in pious uses, and that it came into her mind she could not bestow it better than upon them "who are, alas! strangers out of your own country." (The) Procuratrix thanked her heartily and took the alms, which came very luckily to help them. Also some of the English in the town a little assisted them, as Mr Liggons and his wife in particular, (who) came once before they were enclosed to dine with them, and brought such a meal as served our sisters about a week after. Dr Clement also came once from Brussels to see them, and paid for his diet so long as he continued here, and afterwards against Lent he sent them figs and raisins; and Mrs Allen sent very often some particular thing from her own table for her daughter, being very sickly, so that she was well provided for always. The good old Mother was as fervent to help what she could in the holy Order as if she had been a young nun; she sang the versicles in the choir when need was, which she would sing without book. The Procuratrix desired her to be the grate-sister, and to go also to the grate with those that were called for. This she did for good reasons, as knowing her to be a wise, discreet woman, and they had many enemies, who, though they made a fair show, yet did all what they could against them. She performed this office very willingly, and made so good a shift, that though she was blind, she could grope unto the door when any did ring, and take their errand, then call to some other to have the business despatched. She also would not be idle, but besides the time of prayer which was most part of the day, she did some little work only by feeling, as winding of thread or suchlike thing, and assisted continually with her counsel the Procuratrix.

In this, meanwhile, we must not omit to declare that one sister more was fetched hither from St Ursula's upon the earnest entreaty of one whom they desired to gain for a friend, and he promised that if they would take her he would provide her of sufficient maintenance (which, indeed, was never performed), wherefore our first sisters procured leave from the Archbishop for to have her come hither. Her name was Sister Frances Herbert, daughter to Sir Edward Herbert, brother to the Earl of Pembroke. She came hither upon the day of our Holy Father's Translation, at the end of February, the same month that the others came, so they were now eight in number.

Some time after this, finding difficulty to have the nuns to do all the work, the Procuratrix desired Mrs Liggons to help her unto some good wench for to serve them in the house, not as a lay-sister but as a hired servant; so she found one that desired to be received, who, having served an English gentleman, could speak a little broken English. Her, therefore, she took and brought to our monastery for a servant, who being a good poor soul, a Walloon by nation, she did our poor sisters very good service, coming hither about midsummer the same year. Her name was Hubart, a French name for women, but afterwards at her profession she took the name of Catharine, by reason that upon St Catharine's day of this year, 1609, she was admitted for lay-sister.

About this time, our Lord forgot not His poor servants, but moved a Catholic gentleman by the means of good friends to leave a legacy at his death to this new cloister of St Monica; it was £100. But, I know not by what occasion, we received only fourscore, which the Procuratrix did not spend in their daily maintenance, but made a shift otherwise, and reserved this sum towards the buying of their house. They were about to buy now a less house than this. Mr Liggons was content to sell them *Placet*, where he dwelled, with all the garden and ground belonging to it, only reserving some two or three rooms for himself to live in, all which they should have for £400; and whether they bought it or not, he gave them freely of his own gift a great barn with a little ground to begin to build, if they could get no other house, and promised to let the nuns dwell in his own house until their building was ready. This they accepted of gratefully, but went not yet through with the bargain until afterwards.

About this time our sisters had another accident happened which troubled much for the present. There came one day to this monastery the Infanta's ghostly Father, and being at the grate asked for the Superior, who presently came to him. He told her that he was sent by the Princess to take a view of the house, and to certify her thereof. She instantly let him in, and his interpreter, Father Hew, Guardian of the Irish Friars. When they had viewed the house all over, the nuns, who knew not the meaning thereof, desired the interpreter to entreat the Father he would let them understand what he intended. Then he answered that he was to take the house for to be made a cloister of Teresians, which the Princess would send here for that end, because she understood we would not have it. This news we may well suppose was very unwelcome to our sisters, but the Procuratrix, who was in the place of Superior, fell down upon her knees and besought him to have compassion of poor banished religious, who if they were put out of this house had nowhere to go ; at which words he was much moved, and said he would do his endeavour to assist them, for he knew the Infanta would not require it if it were so prejudicious to them, as also Father Hew promised to put the said Father in mind hereof. And so they expected answer from the Princess with a fearful heart. At length the said Father Hew brought them word her Highness was contented they should enjoy this house, seeing they were already in possession thereof, and so that matter was ended.

It shall not be amiss to set down a strange thing that happened once to Sister Shirley. She having been some months in this house, with the many difficulties and contradictions already mentioned, became almost out of hope that this monastery should go forward. Going to bed one night about ten of the clock with a heavy heart expecting to receive commandment from the Archbishop ere long, as some had told her, to return back to their old cloister from whence they came, as she laid herself down and was spreading her coat to cover her, suddenly in the midst thereof appeared a glorious shining light, round like unto a pewter dish, but most bright and clear like the sun or moon at full (yet there was at that time no sun or moon to be seen in the firmament). Hereupon she was somewhat affrighted and could not tell what to make thereof, but being much amazed she would fain with her hand have put it away, and presently it seemed that the said round compass parted and spread itself all over the bed in the likeness of stars. Whereat she was more amazed than before, and prayed unto God in her mind. After a while it vanished away, and she gave herself unto rest, but in the morning she went to the old Mother and told her all what happened the night before; who, when she heard it, examined what thoughts came into her mind concerning the thing. She answered: many things came into her mind, but those which she could best remember and stayed longest with her, were such as she was loth to tell, because of the great unlikelihood and impossibility thereof at the present. Yet the good Mother urged her earnestly to tell her, and so she said she thought the clear round thing might signify this cloister of St Monica, and the stars that came forth of it might betoken the religious that should live therein. This she affirmed was her thought at that time; "Although, alas!" said she, "it is unlike to prove true." But the old Mother comforted her and she did nothing distrust thereof but hoped the same, yet withal told her she must prepare herself to suffer something before this should happen—the which she found to be most true. For after that, it had assuredly been dissolved with the many forementioned oppositions and hindrances which it had, if Almighty God of His great goodness had not still assisted it. This she set down with her own hand to the end that it might be a comfort to the weak and faint-hearted persons, as she esteemed herself to be, to confide in God, the Worker of all good.

About October of the same year, their troubles whereof we have spoken being somewhat appeased, they desired to increase their company. As yet they were but eight in number, and would hardly perform their duties in the choir; as also most of the English nuns that remained at St Ursula's had written to their parents for means to be able to remove to this new cloister of their own nation.

Within the Octave of All Saints in the same year, 1609, upon a Thursday, the Bishop's licence came unto St Ursula's for eight more to depart. Immediately the Dutch Mother discharged those that had offices, to wit, Sister Mary Wiseman, who was Sub-Prioress, and her sister Bridget, then sick-mistress, and Sister Frances Burrows, Sacristan. The rest had other lesser employments, all which were now set free and released by the Bishop of their obedience to St Ursula's Monastery, and referred unto that of St Monica's. And after this they packed up such things as they had in their cells, as the Mother gave them leave, and their habit and bedding. But these were not called into the Chapter-house, as the former, but they asked in particular pardon of each other, the English to the Dutch, and they again to them, with all kindness. Upon Sunday night they had recreation in the Refectory as the time before at the other's parting, and better fare than ordinary, to be merry together for a farewell, and on Monday the next day in the morning they heard the first Mass, and they came down all to the Grate, and took their leaves of each other with many a weeping eye on both sides, for there was great love among them. Upon the same Monday, it being the Feast of the Church of St Saviour's Dedication in Rome and the 9th of November, came forth from St Ursula's these eight nuns, to wit: the two sisters Wiseman, whose brother had promised them maintenance; Sister Frances Burrow, niece to the Lord Vaux, whose cousin, Mrs Brookesby, that had brought her up, promised £10 a year for her, but performed it only two or three years; Sister Ann Bromfield who had gotten a grant of my Lady Petre of £10 a year, which she faithfully performed for many years, as long as she lived; Sister Susan Labourne, daughter to a holy martyr, for whom the old Countess of Arundell gave now £80 once for all to help her hither. The two sisters Tremain had nothing, but because they were good souls and fit persons to help in the Order, both those of St Monica's and those that came out of St Ursula's were willing to have them. Sister Mary Skidmore, the youngest, had promise of her uncle, Sir Richard Farmer, of 20 nobles a year; moreover, because she could play the organ and had other good parts, was gladly taken with them. These eight were named in the last-mentioned licence of the Bishop, who also went with hukes in the street in order, but Mrs Worthington would needs go before with the youngest for to lead the way. The rest followed by two and two; the last came alone with Father Fenn, who was come from St Monica's to fetch them, and their servant Roger was sent to bring their things with the waggonmen. They went first to St Peter's and heard another Mass there, which Father Holbie (Holtby) celebrated. From thence they went to the Augustine Friars to visit the Blessed Sacrament of Miracles which is kept there, and after that Mr Worthington, without their knowledge, led them also to his house, having gotten leave of the Archbishop.

After dinner, about two or three of the clock, they came to this monastery and were kindly received of their sisters and the old Mother. Having then awhile congratulated with each other, they went to Evensong together, and at supper they had recreation in the Refectory for to welcome them and to rejoice together in our Lord. Upon the Wednesday after, being St Martin's day, they began their fast for the Election of a Prioress, and kept silence all that week until the Vicarious (Vicar) of the Archbishop came. So that upon Monday morning, the said Vicarious called them to give their voices. Then was elected for the first Prioress of St Monica's, Sister Mary Wiseman, who as we have said had the most voices at St Ursula's in the election there two years before. They went then into the Choir and installed her in the dignity ; after that they came to the Chapter-house and there in the presence of the Vicarious, all the nuns, as the manner is, bowed in obedience unto her. After that she chose for Sub-Prioress, Sister Elizabeth Shirley, who was before in the place both of Superior and Procuratrix. They chose, moreover, for Arcaria, Sister Bridget Wiseman, and for Procuratrix, Sister Margaret Tremain. Then our monastery was now to the honour of God confirmed and established, which Almighty God of His goodness hath since prospered so well, as shall appear by that which followeth. But the house was not as yet bought, for supposing that the new Abbot would raise the price, they went in hand with Mr Liggons in the bargain of *Placet* aforementioned.

So about Christmas that house was bought for the price of £400, and forthwith they began to build upon the ground more room, for it sufficed not of itself to make a monastery, and when they had bestowed almost £100 in building there, one day the new Abbot of this house coming upon occasion that way, asked for what that building was. They told him it was for the English nuns that lived in his house. He hearing this, and having need of money at the present, gave them to understand that he would stand to the bargain which his predecessor had made, and they should have this house for the same price as before. Whereupon the Vicarious having seen both the house of *Placet* and this, judged this one far more convenient for the religious than that other, by reason it stood very high and old and wanted water, with other discommodities, so he advised our sisters if they could to break off with Mr Liggons and to buy this house ; which they proposed unto him, and although he was loth to undo the sale, it being already signed and sealed, yet such was his charity, that for to do our nuns a pleasure, he was content to disannul the same, and they were content also to forego the building made there. But Mr Liggons afterwards at his death requited them again, leaving us £80 for a legacy as the books of account do show. So this house was bought in the year 1610.

About this time the Rev. Father Baldwin of the Society of Jesus being to leave his residence at Brussels, at his departure reckoning up his accounts found what money he had in keeping of Sister Shirley's, our Sub-Prioress, which her friends at several times had sent her for relief out of England, when she lived at St Ursula's, and was amounted to above £80, so he left order that the said sum should be sent hither to this cloister which also helped well at the beginning.

But to say something of our Sisters' descent and of their parents which ought chiefly to be remembered. First, our Reverend Mother Mary Wiseman was of very holy parentage. Her father lived and died a constant confessor of the Catholic religion, named Thomas Wiseman, of Braddock in Essex, an Esquire of ancient family, who suffered much for his conscience, his house being a receptacle for all priests and religious men. He brought up his children not only very virtuously but also to learning of the Latin tongue, as well the daughters as the sons, himself being their master. Besides that, in his house was order kept resembling a monastery; at the meals for half an hour was something read, unless strangers were there of a higher degree than himself, otherwise this worthy custom was not omitted. He himself lived for the most part a reclused life, by reason that being troubled with the gout he resided alone in his chamber, giving himself to prayer and holy lecture, as also every Friday he would make an exhortation to his children in Latin, thereby to exercise them in that language, as also to give good instruction. By which worthy education they profited so much that, having four daughters, the two eldest came over seas, and became nuns of St Bridget's Order, and have both governed the monastery at Lisbon in Portugal, being chosen at several times by mutual interchange Abbesses, and at this present year (1631) one is Abbess and the other Prioress. The two younger daughters came to St Ursula's to St Augustine's Order, leaving the kind cherishings of most loving parents to embrace the strictness of poverty and want whereof we have spoken ; such was their fervour to God's service even in tender age following the example of their most virtuous parents.

For to speak now of their worthy mother, whose life hath partly been set down by some that knew her well ; her name before her marriage was Jane Vacham (Vaughan), her father being of ancient house in Wales, but her mother of the blood royal. She being left a ward by her parents' death, passed many troubles and molestations to avoid marriage, by those who had her in keeping, for having no mind to marry by reason that she was drawn through God's instinct to delight in spiritual things. Her uncle by the mother's side, named Mr Guinnith, who was a priest and had been curate of a parish church in London in Catholic times, could not assist her in all so well as he desired, being a long time kept in prison when heresy came in. But at length getting freedom he was desirous to watch this his niece worthily, and as should be best for her soul's good. Wherefore, one day he met with Mr Wiseman, a young gentleman of the Inns of Court, and liked him so well that, upon the proposition of one in the company, he became content to marry his niece with him, and brought him unto her, persuading her, if she could like him, to take him for her husband. But she was ever very backward in that matter, insomuch that having no less than thirty suitors, some whereof had seven years sought her goodwill, yet she could not settle her love upon any. But now it was God's Will that she should yield herein to her uncle and so was married to Mr Wiseman, who brought her home to his house in Essex, where she found both father and mother-in-law and a houseful of brothers and sisters, among whom she passed some difficulty, not having things always to her mind, but all happened to make her virtue more refined. For she ever carried herself both loving and dutiful to her husband, who loved her dearly, as also to his kindred, and assisted them all in what she could, living in the state of marriage irreprehensible and bringing up her children in all virtue. After her husband's decease, exercising the works of a holy widow, it pleased our Lord to rank her not only among the troops of holy confessors, but also as we may say of valiant martyrs, and of the most famous women that England afforded in this our miserable times of heresy, for she was ever most fervent and zealous in religion, and so devout in prayer, that she was once heard to say by her daughter, our Reverend Mother: "It seems," said she, "that if I were tied to a stake and burned alive for God, I should not feel it, so great is the love to Him which I feel in my soul at this time." Wherefore, Almighty God to make her love to Him indeed apparent, permitted that Topcliffe, the cruel persecutor, did vehemently set against her, and, at length, only for proving that she had relieved a Catholic priest by giving him a French crown, brought her before the Bar to be condemned to death for felony. But she constantly refused to be condemned by the jury, saying that she would not have twelve men accessory to her innocent death, for she knew, although they could not by rights find her guilty, yet they should be made to do it when her enemies pleased. Hereupon they told her that she was by the law to be pressed to death, if she would not be tried by the jury.

But she stood firm in her resolutions, being well content to undergo so grievous a martyrdom for the love of Christ; yea, when they declared unto her the manner of that death in the hardest terms, as the custom is at their condemnation, the worthy woman, hearing that she must be laid with her arms a cross when the weights were to be put on her, exulted with joy and said: "Now, blessed be God that I shall die with my arms a cross as my Lord Jesus." And after this, when her sons lamented with sorrow, she rejoiced and cheered them up. There was at the same time a Catholic gentleman, named Mr Barnes, brought also before the Bench to be arraigned with her, who being a man yet had not such courage as she to be pressed to death, but was content to be tried by the jury, and they were made to find him guilty, as she knew well enough, although by right they could not do it, and so he was condemned to hanging for felony. But neither he nor she died at that time, for Almighty God accepting of this courageous matron's fervour to martyrdom, would not have her to depart so soon out of this life that she might have a longer time of suffering for Him, as also do more good works for His honour: therefore He ordained that Queen Elizabeth, who then bore the sceptre in England, hearing of her condemnation, stayed the execution. For by bribes her son got one to speak a good word unto the Queen in his mother's behalf. Who when she understood how for so small a matter she should have been put to death, rebuked the justices of cruelty and said she should not die. Notwithstanding, both she and Mr Barnes were in prison as long as the Queen lived, in which time Topcliffe ceased not often to molest her with divers vexations, insomuch that she was once made for a good space to lie with a witch in the same room, who was put in prison for her wicked deeds, and it was a strange thing to see that many resorting to the same witch there in prison, to know things of her by art of magic, she never had the power to exercise her necromancy in the room where Mrs Wiseman was, but was forced to go away into another place.

One thing also we will not omit, which was a miraculous thing. Upon a time her friend Topcliffe passed under her window, being mounted upon a goodly horse going to the Queen, and Mrs Wiseman espying him thought it would not be amiss to wash him a little with holy water, therefore took some which she had by her, and flung it upon him and his horse as he came under her window. It was a wonderful thing to see; no sooner had the holy water touched the horse, but presently it seems he could not endure his rider, for the horse began so to kick and fling that he never ceased till his master Topcliffe was flung to the ground, who looked up to the window and raged against Mrs Wiseman calling her an old witch, who, by her charms, had made his horse to lay him on the ground, but she with good reason laughed to see that holy water had given him so fine a fall.

After Queen Elizabeth's death this holy woman lived some years out of prison, but wanted not good occasions to exercise patience by one that was allied to her, a most perverse fantastical woman who used her very ill, so that both in prison and out of prison she wanted not crosses to make her the more renowned by a long martyrdom. In all, as I find written of her, she exulted in mind and abounded in spiritual comfort out of the loyal and fervent love which she bore to God, until at length in the year 1610, when at length her merits were accumulated unto a greater measure for eternal glory, she fell into a most grievous and painful sickness, where amidst her great pains she would rejoice and give Almighty God thanks that He pleased to accept of these her sufferings in place of greater which she had desired to pass for His sake, and coming to her happy death the last words which she said to the priest were: *Pater, gaudeo in Deo* (Father, I rejoice in God), and so rested in our Lord.

These were the parents of our first Prioress, who had also four sons; two died priests of the Society of Jesus, the other died a good Catholic, and the eldest, Sir William Wiseman, is yet living, a man more of heaven than the world. Our Reverend Mother was professed in the year 1595, upon the 8th of May, changing her name which was Jane; and Sister Bridget (Wiseman) upon the 11th of June, together with Sister Margaret Garnett and Sister Rookwood, who died about the time that the Dutch Mother was elected, of a consumption, very sweetly, as she had lived, for she was a mild, virtuous soul, sweet and affable in her conversation, and beloved of all her sisters. So she rested blessedly in our Lord.

PREFACE TO CHAPTER THE THIRD

A Novice from Queen Elizabeth's Court. The Mother of the Maids of Honour. The Copleys of Gatton. Anthony Copley. The Gages of Firle. The Throckmorton family. Catholic gaiety amid persecutions. Sister Shirley's MS. Beautiful death of Mother Margaret Clement. "Let me do as the swan doth, sing you a song before my death."

From the Catholic manor-houses of Essex and Leicestershire, our chronicler takes us now to the Court of Queen Elizabeth, where the widow of Edward Bromfield, a Surrey gentleman who had died a Catholic, held the office of mistress to the maids of honour. Her daughter Anne lived with her at Court; both were Protestants. Sir Edward Bromfield, who was perhaps Anne's brother, was a Justice of the Peace for Surrey, and was one of the magistrates before whom Cuthbert Clapton, the Venetian Ambassador's chaplain, was arraigned at the Old Bailey in 1641.

Anne Bromfield's highest ambition was for a brilliant marriage. Her ambitious thoughts helped to keep her free of dangerous entanglements at that profligate Court, and our chronicler tells the touching story of how she left the Court for the Cloister of Louvain, and became the Bride of the King. She was one of Father John Gerard's converts.

Our chronicler gives Mrs Bromfield her correct title at Court, the "Mother of the Maids." Some information on this lady's duties may be gathered from the following:

THE FOUR SISTERS TUNSTALL, CANONESSES, O.S.A.

Daughters of Francis Tunstall of Wycliffe, and of Cecily Constable, daughter of John, Viscount Dunbar.

From Miniatures belonging to St Augustine's Priory.

[*Face page* 86.

"Orders signed by the King and Queen's Majesty, November 1631:—

"The Maydes of Honour to come into the Presence Chamber before eleven of the clock, and to goe to prayers, and after prayers to attend untill the Queene be sett at dynner. And again at two of the clock to returne into the said Chamber, and there to remaine untill supper time, when they shall retyre into theire chamber.

"And that they goe not at any time out of the Court without leave asked of the Lord Chamberlaine, Vice-Chamberlaine, or of her Majestie.

"And that the mother of the maydes see all these orders concerning the maydes duly observed, as she will answer the contrary; and if she shall find any refractoryness in those that should obey, that she acquaint the Lord Chamberlaine or Vice-Chamberlaine therewith."

The most extraordinary of the family histories to which we are introduced by our chronicler is that of the Copleys of Gatton in Surrey, which follows the touching story of Sister Anne Bromfield, from the same county. Helen Copley, with her Sister Mary, who for twenty-eight years was Sub-Prioress of the community, were the first choir-novices received after the foundation of St Monica's and were professed together in 1612; Clare Copley, their cousin, in 1624; and Dorothy Musgrave, whose mother was a Copley, in 1632. The head of the Copleys of Gatton claimed the barony of Welles, between which and his claim stood an unreversed attainder; Leo, Lord Welles, his ancestor, slain at Towton in 1461, having had the misfortune to have fought on the Lancastrian side. Our chronicler, regardless of attainders, gives Sir Thomas Copley his title of "Lord Welles."

The family was one of wealth and influence in Surrey. "The celebrated borough of Gatton," writes Lingard, quoting from the Loseley MSS., "was (in Elizabeth's reign) the property of the Copleys, and the nomination of the representative was possessed by Mrs Copley. But that lady was not considered well affected, on which account the Queen ordered that her own nominees, or at least well-affected persons, should be returned." In 1621, Sir George More reported to the House of Commons that John Hollis, second son of Lord Houghton, and Sir Henry Bretton, both papists, had been returned for Gatton by Mr Copley's influence, he owning almost all the town, while Sir Thomas Gresham and Sir Thomas Bludder had been chosen by the freeholders. The House declared the election of the two papists void.

Sir Thomas Copley of Gatton, grandfather of Sisters Helen and Mary, was the only son of Sir Roger Copley of Roughway in Sussex, his mother, Elizabeth Shelley, being the daughter of Sir Richard Shelley, Lord Prior of St John of Jerusalem. Bridget, Sir Thomas's sister, by her marriage with Richard Southwell of Horsham, St Faith's, in Norfolk, became the mother of the glorious martyr, Venerable Robert Southwell, S.J., who died at Tyburn, 21st February 1595. Sir Thomas, though brought up a Catholic, lost the faith in early youth, and (a singular example in those days), was "a hot heretic" in Mary's reign and a resolute Catholic in that of Elizabeth. Lord Howard of Effingham offered him his sister in marriage, but Sir Thomas had chosen a fairer bride, as the good chronicler tells us, and married Elizabeth, the daughter of Sir John Lutterell. The vindictive Howard had his revenge at hand in the cruel laws against popish recusants, and by the Queen's favour entered into possession of the estates of the man who had rejected his sister's hand. Harassed and despoiled, the noble confessor of the faith crossed the seas and entered the service of the King of Spain. At the Court of France he was also held in high honour, and created a Baron by the French King. But he would never renounce his loyalty to Elizabeth, and in his letter to Burghley insists that in accepting a French title, he never meant to renounce his allegiance; nor would he share in the plots of some of the English exiles, so that the exiled Countess of Northumberland had to caution one of these, William Cotton, "to have nothing to do with Sir Thomas Copley." Burghley seems to have retained some friendship for him, and urged his return to England, of course at the sacrifice of his faith. Sir Thomas died in Flanders. His eldest son had been knighted by the King of France, and died at the French Court in his nineteenth year.

William, Sir Thomas's second son and his heir, whose heroic constancy in the faith rivalled his father's, made a fruitless attempt to recover the estates. His aunt Catherine, Sir Thomas's sister, had married Sir Thomas Lane, and their Protestant son, Sir William Lane, succeeded in usurping the rights of his recusant cousin. Among the English exiles was one Thomas Prideaux, of that ancient Devon house whose monuments are to be seen in many a Devonshire village church. Unlike most of his family, such as the Nicholas Prideaux whom we find denouncing as a recusant one of Sir John Arundel's servants at Lanherne, Thomas Prideaux's faith remained unshaken, and we find him on 1st September 1574, writing to his brother Richard in England, to whom he sends his wife and daughter on a visit, and describing his sorrows and desolation. His wife was Helen Clement, sister to Mother Margaret, the foundress of our community. William Copley met the family in Spain, and Magdalen Prideaux, the daughter referred to, became his wife, and the mother of our two Canonesses. The rest of their story I leave to our chronicler.

Now we come to the strange career of Anthony Copley, Sir Thomas's fourth son, and the father of our Sister Clare. Of the promise of his youth we have three strangely diverse witnesses, Father Parsons, S.J., our chronicler, and Topcliffe the priest-hunter. Anthony had tried his vocation at the English College in Rome, and Father Parsons writes of him: "Some of us knew him as a little idle-headed boy in the English College, so lightwitted as once, if we remember well, he went up with a rose in his mouth to preach, or make the tones, as they call them, before the College out of a pulpit." The chronicler says that "he sought to raise his fortune by gaining the favour of great men." Topcliffe wrote to the Queen that Anthony Copley is "the most desperate youth that liveth. . . . Copley did shoot at a gentleman last summer and killed an ox with a musket, and in Horsham Church threw his dagger at the parish clerk and stuck it in a seat in the church. There liveth not the like I think in England for sudden attempts: nor one upon whom I have more good grounds for watchful eyes for his sister Gage's and his brother-in-law Gage's sake."

Though a layman, Anthony Copley flung himself into the controversy between the secular clergy and the Jesuits. His language on his adversaries is quite unprintable in these pages. No sooner had James I. come to the throne than Copley with Sir Griffin Markham and others, entered into the insane conspiracy to seize the King, known as "The Bye." John Gage of Firle, Anthony's brother-in-law, denounced the conspirators, and Copley was forthwith arrested, in July 1603. After some resistance he made a full confession of all he knew and probably something more. His accomplices were in consequence apprehended, and two priests, Watson and Clark, executed. On 18th August 1604, his pardon was granted, but he had to go into exile, his brother William being heavily fined on his account. Of his wife our chronicler only says that she was "a gentlewoman of the Isle of Wight," who used occasionally to conform, "living in and out of the Church," and eventually died a Catholic. With the help of her saintly uncle William, his daughter, Sister Clare, became a nun at St Monica's.

Through all his vagaries, Anthony Copley firmly adhered to the Catholic Faith. The chronicler of St Monica's reveals the end of his erratic career. In company with Ambrose Vaux, he had gone on a pilgrimage to

Jerusalem, was there, she adds, dubbed knight by the Guardian of the Holy Sepulchre, and died on his homeward journey. He is, of course, annually commemorated in the suffrages of the community. His daughter lived a fervent and devout nun for fifty-six years at St Monica's till her death in 1679. Yet it looks like an inherited touch of her father's restlessness that, as the chronicler writes, "she was so open-hearted that no priest (that is to say, no English priest) of whatever Order came to the grate but she if possible got leave to speak to him," which, the writer adds, used to leave her somewhat disquieted in mind. Very likely. John Copley, another son of Sir Thomas Copley, was admitted as an alumnus of the English College in 1599, at the age of twenty-two. He was born at Louvain. In 1612 a book appeared in England, written by "John Copley, Seminarie priest," wherein the author gives "the reasons of his late unenforced departure from the Church of Rome and of his incorporation to the present Church of England."

As a reparation for this scandal stands forth the heroic example of Margaret Copley, sister to our two Canonesses. She had married John Gage of Firle, and was arrested together with Venerable Anne Line as both were hearing the Mass of Venerable Francis Page, S.J. The two last were martyred; Mr and Mrs Gage were both sentenced to death, but respited on their way to the place of execution. One of their children was a Jesuit, another a secular priest and confessor of the faith, a third was the unhappy apostate on whose testimony Venerable Peter Wright was condemned and executed. The fourth was Colonel Henry Gage, slain near Abingdon during the Civil War. This noble and saintly cavalier was the ideal of a Christian soldier. His lofty stature, graceful bearing, and dauntless heroism made him the favourite of King Charles I. and the idol of his soldiers. Clarendon, to whom he was intimately known, admired him above all the royal officers, though Clarendon was a staunch Protestant. The

Chancellor relates that when Sir Arthur Aston, himself a Catholic, told the King "that Gage was the most Jesuited papist alive, and had a Jesuit that lived with him" (Venerable Peter Wright), and Charles had thought right to caution the Colonel, he replied: "That he had never dissembled his religion, nor ever would; that he knew no witness could be produced who had ever seen him at Mass in Oxford, though he heard Mass every day." As if to emphasise the strange contradictions in this extraordinary family, a Colonel Copley at this very time was in arms against his King in the army of the Parliament. Dames Mary and Alexia Copley were Benedictine nuns at Dunkerque.

Under the title of "A Maryland Pioneer," the Rev. W. P. Treacy in the *Month* for July 1886, give a sketch of the life of Father Thomas Copley, S.J., the brother of our Sisters Mary and Helen Copley. Born at Madrid about 1594, he entered the Jesuit novitiate at Louvain, was on the English mission in 1624, obtained in 1633 a royal exemption from the penalties of recusancy through some Court influence, and in 1636 was named Superior of the Maryland mission. Thence, ten years later, he was sent in chains to England, but returned to America about 1648, and died in 1653, being known in earlier times to the colonists as Thomas Copley, Esq., and afterwards taking the name of Fisher.

Of Dame Mary Copley, O.S.B., of Dunkerque, the Teignmouth Records say that she was professed in 1679, at the age of nineteen, that her eldest brother married, two other brothers were religious, her eldest sister was a Canoness, two others Poor Clares at Gravelines, and the remaining sister came to Dunkerque (Dame Alexia).

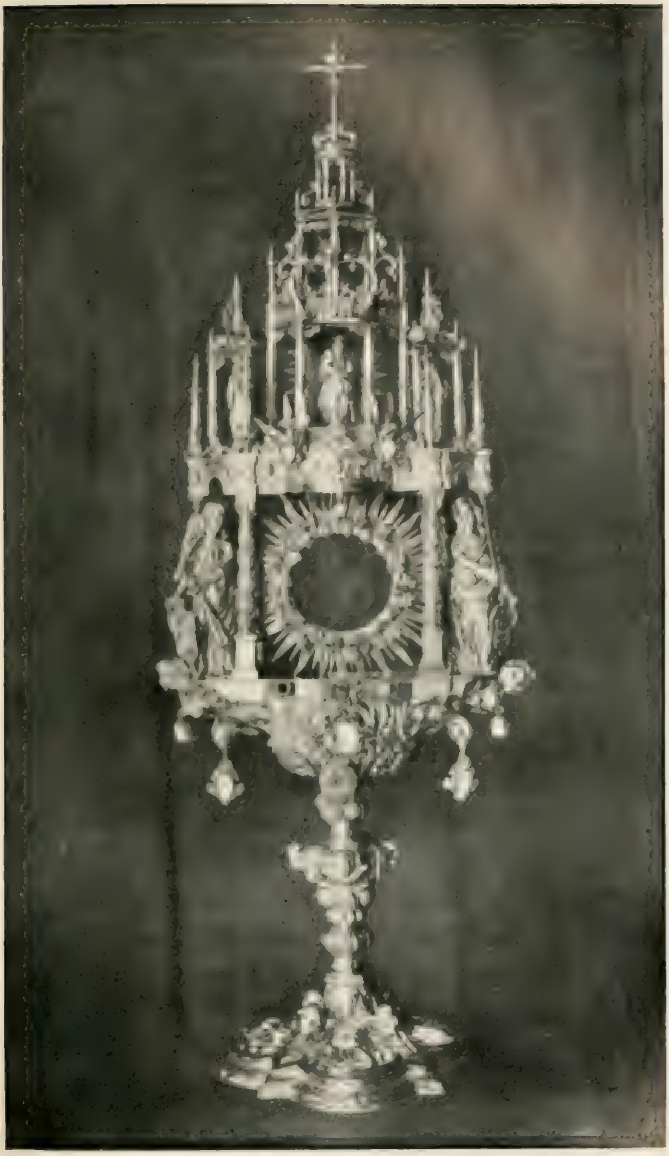
The profession of Margaret Throckmorton, the future Prioress, on St Lawrence's day, 1611, calls for some notice of this ancient and distinguished Catholic family of Warwickshire.

In the days of Henry the Eighth, Sir George Throckmorton was imprisoned in the Tower by order of Cromwell, who coveted his noble seat at Coughton, for refusing the oath of supremacy. The good old knight's firmness in the faith was invincible, but Queen Catharine Parr who was Lady Throckmorton's niece, saved his life and obtained his freedom. A full list of those of the family who consecrated themselves to God in religion, I am not yet able to give; but it would be a long one; Sir George's own aunt was the last Abbess of Denny.

Under Elizabeth, Sir George's grandchildren, Francis, Thomas, and Edward, were among the noblest of our confessors of the faith. They were the children of Sir John (not Sir Nicholas, as stated in the "Life" of Edward, given in Foley's *Records*) Throckmorton, Chief-Justice of Wales, who for a time unhappily conformed, but whose house was always a secure refuge for hunted priests. Edward, who died a scholastic S.J., having been received into the Society on his deathbed, was one of those angelic youths whom we can only compare with St Aloysius or St Stanislaus. Thomas, after being cruelly racked in the Tower, was set at liberty, and was subsequently engaged to be married to Mary Allen, the Cardinal's niece, but died in 1595 before the marriage could take place; Mary Allen subsequently married Mr Thomas Worthington of Blainscowe in Lancashire. Francis was executed at Tyburn, after being three times racked, in 1584. The charge against the two brothers was one of conspiracy in behalf of Mary, Queen of Scots. Dr Richard Barrett wrote from Rheims to Father Agazzarri, S.J., Rector of the English College at Rome: "Without any doubt the cause of their sufferings is their faith and piety towards God, and their devotion and loyalty to the Apostolic See." Their sister, Ann, became the wife of Sir William Wigmore of Lucton in Herefordshire and the mother of Lady Abbess Wigmore, O.S.B., of Pontoise. Her granddaughter, Bridget, married Richard Vaughan of Courtfield, of whom more hereafter.

Six years after the judicial murder or martyrdom of her kinsman, Margaret (in religion Sister Magdalen) Throckmorton, the future Prioress of Louvain, was born. Her parents were John Throckmorton, a grandson of Sir George, and Agnes Wilford; her eldest brother, Sir Robert Throckmorton of Weston Underwood and Coughton. From childhood she lived amid the noise of strife and persecution. Coughton Hall was one of the most frequent hiding-places of the holy martyrs, Fathers Garnett and Oldcorne, S.J.; in fact, Fathers Garnett and Tesimond were concealed at Coughton in the days immediately following the discovery of the Powder Plot, just as at an earlier date while Blessed Edmund Campian was in prison, we find the Council writing to the keepers of Wisbeach, of a meeting that had taken place between Thomas Pounde and the Martyr at Throckmorton House in London. Sister Magdalen's mother, the daughter of Thomas Wilford of Lenham in Lancashire, had seen her father's London house broken into by the pursuivants in 1584, the year of Francis Throckmorton's execution: their reports mention among the children of Mr Thomas Wilford whom they found there, Humphrey, William, Agnes, Joyce, Frances, and Catharine.

Very wonderfully do religious communities join in one the past and the present. The silver altar-bread box beautifully chiselled on both sides of the cover, with the sacrifice of Abraham on one side, and the sacrifice of the Cross on the other, given by Prioress Throckmorton, and bearing the date of 1537, is still in use at St Augustine's Priory; so also is the set of red velvet vestments, given by her uncle, Sir William Roper. The rich silver-gilt monstrance, another of her gifts, is still used on great festivals by our nuns, and the badge of the Blessed Sacrament, now worn by the Canonesses in token of the Perpetual Adoration on their red scapular, is a picture of Prioress Throckmorton's monstrance. Since her days it has been enriched by the jewels of another noble martyr's daughter, Sister



Monstrance given to St Monica's Community by Throckmorton Family, 1660.

Now at St Augustine's Priory, Newton Abbot.

Face page 94.

Ursula Stafford, concerning whom I shall have much to say later on.

Strange as it may appear, there seems to have been no lack of gaiety and wit in the persecuted Catholic households of those days. An odd example is to be found in Sir Nicholas Throckmorton's poetry, of which I give as a sample a passage referring to the family distress when his father, Sir George, was in danger of his life :—

> "Our sun eclipsed a long time did not shine,
> No joys approached near unto Coughton House;
> My sisters they did nothing else but whine,
> My mother looked much like a drownèd mouse;
> No butter then would stick upon our bread,
> We all did fear the loss of father's head."

As the death of the Venerable Mother Margaret Clement is recorded in the present chapter, we cannot better close our preface than by giving some passages from her life from Sister Shirley's manuscript :—

"She never used the service of any more but one, which was only to dress her cell and chamber, and to fold her linen; and all the day after the same nun came into the common work; she herself also, if she were not letted (hindered) by other business. She did also in the winter come to the common fire; for the (poverty of) the convent would not allow her to keep a fire alone. But her own brother, being a surgeon in the town, gave her certain loads of wood to that end every year. But this when she was grown old, for otherwise, I think, she would not have accepted it; she had such a great desire to be among the convent in all places, and thereby come to see that which was amiss, that she might the better reform it. For which end she had in her chamber a table, wherein was written in great hand all the offices in the house: as, the choir, vestry, refectory, kitchen, bakehouse, washhouse, warm chamber; which had every one a hole, and a peg to put therein, for her better memory, that when she came to the Chapter, she might correct it.

"She said, when she first went blind, that a Superior that could do nothing was not fit to be a Superior any longer. Therefore she would not be kept on at any entreaty of the convent, that made great moan therefore. She did often go into the houses of office, as the bakehouse, brewhouse, washhouse, and milkhouse, and there she did see all the faults, and sometimes she would go into the vestry (wardrobe and sewing-room), and sit among them and work, for she could never be idle; yea, when she was stark blind, she would be winding thread, or something she would make herself work.

"She was exceedingly neat and cleanly in all things that she did. The elders would say they could not wonder enough to see how neatly and decent she went in her linen and habit when she was a young nun, without any curiosity, for that she could not abide. Her clothes were never other than the common sisters', and no oftener washed. She told me once it was one of the greatest mortifications that she had, when she came first to be Mother, and must have another to wash and fold her linen. They did so flatteringly, but because it was a thing that was belonging to herself, she would not correct it, for that, she said, would not have edified: which she always observed in anything that belonged to herself. But, as she said, she would wait her time, that when she could see it in their own linen or clothes, she would tell it them roundly. This I noted to show how careful she was to correct with edification.

"There is a religious whom I will not name, because she is yet living, who told me herself, that being one time in great temptation, and especially in one thing which she could not overcome, although she had greatly combated with herself therein, but seeing the wicked enemy with his motion to grow more violent while her strength failed; in a manner she gave herself over to his will, to yield to the same, taking therein some small delight. But not being able, through the great goodness of God, to conceal it from the Mother, she told her how it went with her, and how she took contentment in it. Which our good Mother hearing, being greatly troubled, admonished her very earnestly to recant and not to yield, but she, being so obstinate and hardened therein would nothing relent. Whereupon was the good Mother with great grief of heart for the soul which was in such danger for the time ; the person going to her cell, nothing moved, began to do something, for pray she could not ; but within a little while she felt her heart to relent, and her motion of mind to go off from her wicked purpose, whereat, as she told me herself, she was somewhat troubled, having had such contentment before in the same thing, for as yet it seemed her perverse will was not yet subdued. Thus, as she was pondering what this might be that moved her heart so much, she thought perfectly she heard one speak in her mind : Go, she prayeth for thee before such a picture in the choir : and going presently she found the good Mother kneeling before the picture, all bedewed with tears, unto whom she said : Good Mother, where have you been all this while? And she, answering, said : Child, I have been praying for you : and as she told me herself, from that time she had no more of the temptation, such was the effect of her holy prayer.

"After the time that Almighty God had stricken her with blindness, and that she had with much ado and great entreaty procured of the head Superiors to be absolved and released of her office of government, to her great contentment, but to the great grief and sorrow of all her convent ; she wholly gave herself to prayer and meditation, so that I have admired to see a woman of her years to kneel so long, with her hands folded together, without any stay to her feeble body. She frequented the Blessed Sacrament every day with great devotion ; and the nun that led her to the place where she was to receive, would often say she found such inward consolation in kneeling by her, as she could not express. Now after she had been blind some six years, it happened that some treated of a separation of the English from the Dutch, to which she very willingly accorded, as also consented herself to be one of the first that should begin the new monastery, notwithstanding her blindness, as also her unableness of body. Her great zeal was such that she never respected the great incommodities and inconveniences that she should find in her own bodily necessities, nor in coming to a naked house, which had nothing but bare walls, she being one of the six whom the Bishop appointed to begin the house, but giving her no authority nor any superiority over the rest more than her years of profession required. It was admirable to see with what humility and true subjection she carried herself towards the sister who was appointed to govern for that time until the election, or if she had to receive but an apple from the religious of the other monastery, she would first ask leave, or anything else that belonged to the straitness of the Order, as if she had been the least. The sister that was as Superior was sometimes thereat greatly abashed and ashamed at so great humility, and would say unto her: Alas! Mother, what need have you to be so strict in your obedience? you know the head Superiors have released you of the burthen of the Order ever since your jubilee; whereat she would answer with great zeal: God forbid I should come hither amongst you to seek myself or my own liberty; far may that be from me, but rather, the more I have gone before you in my years and profession, the more I must show you example by my life and manners. It pleased God for her comfort to send her two of her nieces to be religious in the same house with her, in whom she greatly joyed, and would often say: It is time that I now go to my home, for I have here two pawns to leave in my place. And so it seemed that Almighty God had ordained; for they were no sooner professed, but, within ten days after, He called her out of this world, for she always prayed to God that she might see those two children settled in religion before her death, and it happened to her accordingly.

"She died of a vehement burning ague mingled with a pleurisy, for which she was twice let blood, and had other remedies applied, as the doctors of physic appointed, but it would not avail, but showed evidently that her time was come. For these her nieces were gone three or four months above their year of probation, much against her mind, but their other friends would have it so. But in that and in any other thing she never desired to seek herself or her own will, but gave herself over, and so it pleased God to spare her three months longer, till they were professed. And, as it were, reflecting of her death, sitting at the high table by the Mother that was then, being very merry in recreation, she said unto her: Good Mother, give me leave to do as the swan doth, that is, to sing you a song now before my death: which the Prioress answered, saying: Good Mother, let us hear it: and with that she set out such a voice, that all the company admired. It was a Dutch ditty, but the matter was of the Spouse and the Bridegroom. This was her last, for she never came to the Refectory after; for the next day, being Friday, she, sitting in the choir in her place and reading with the convent a dirge for the month, her sickness took her vehemently with a burning fit; yet would she not stir till the Office was out; and then she was led to her cell, and lived but four days after, for the fever was most violent, but she showed great patience therein.

"It happened I spake to her in this her sickness, and bewailed the case of one person who was not yet settled among us, fearing lest by temptation she should depart from us, but she answered me again with a great courage: Child, you shall see by God His grace she shall overcome all things. I being no sooner gone, but she fell to her prayers, so earnestly and so loud that our Rev. Father Confessor, coming in to see her, heard plainly the words;

for it was contrary to her wonted manner, for she did seldom use to move her lips in her prayer, but sometimes I have seen the tears trickle down without changing her countenance. But now being blind, and seeing nobody by her, she thought she might speak out her mind to Almighty God, but our Father sitting still till he thought she had done, said aloud to her: Amen, Mother. She started up: O, is there anybody there? and presently turning herself again, she began all the same in Dutch. And we might well know that it was for some person that needed some fortitude and constancy, whereby I gathered that as she had her whole life withstood the wicked enemy in all his snares that he laid for poor religious, she persevered therein until the last breath.

"The day before she died, the Mother came unto her, saying: Good Mother, I humbly beseech you to be mindful of us your poor children, when you shall come into the heavenly wine-cellar to be inebriated: and with that she grasped her by the hand, and said: O Mother, shall I come to drink of the wine indeed? but when, when? And presently she called for the Blessed Sacrament and the holy oils, which she received with great devotion, reading with us as well as she could, for then her speech began to fail, and so continued till after midnight, and then she fell into a deadly sleep, and so at 4 o'clock in the morning she gave up her spirit, which made me think that our Lord preserved her from feeling the great pains of the agony of death, for she had a great terror to think thereof all her lifetime."

Such was the most happy death of Mother Margaret Clement. It forms a fitting companion picture to that of her saintly mother, the heroic lady who succoured the dying Carthusian martyrs amid the horrors of Newgate prison. The graces that have been showered on the community during three centuries, have made their long history a worthy continuation of its noble beginnings.

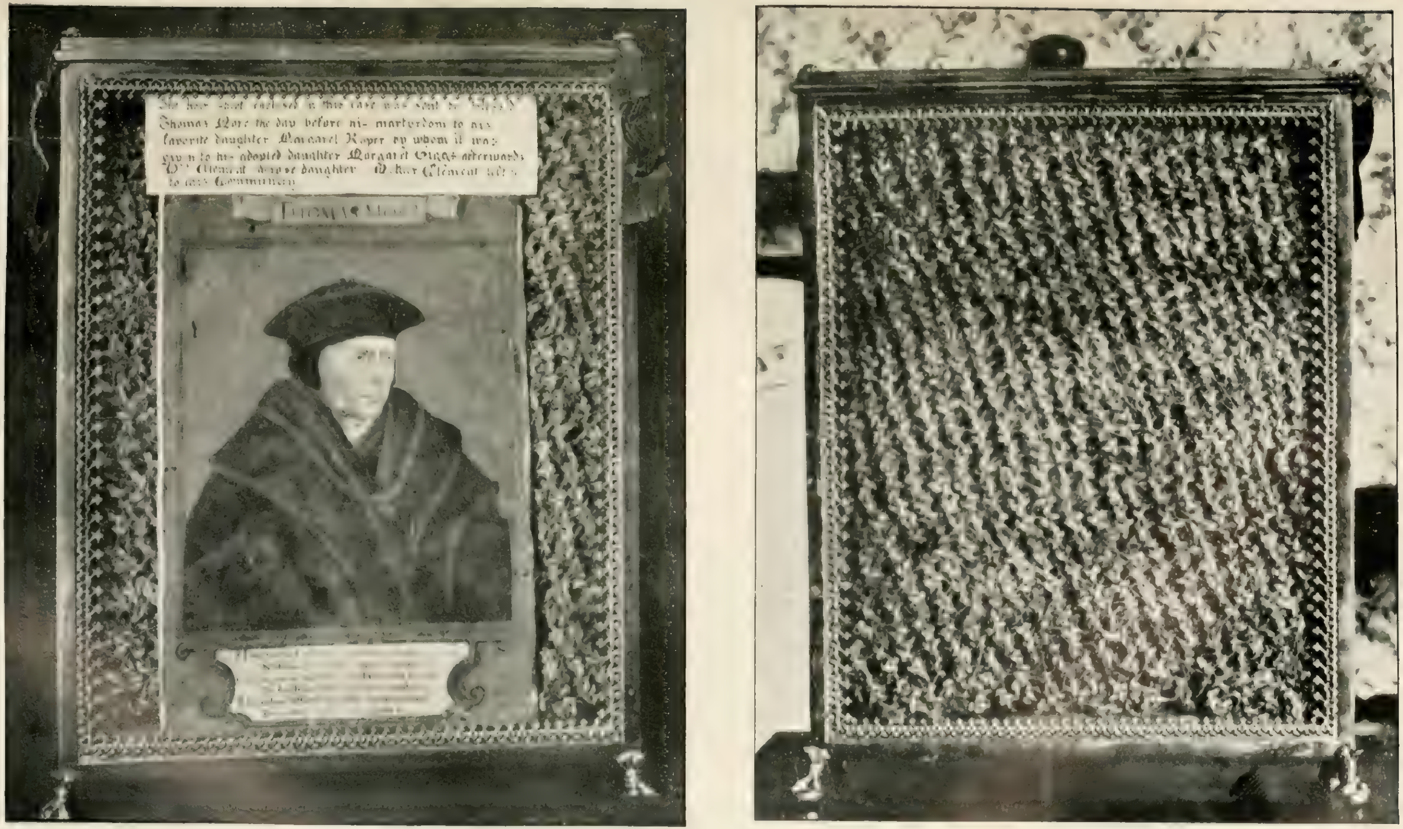
(*Louvain MSS.;* Foley's *Records*, *S.J.;* Father Morris's

Troubles of Our Catholic Forefathers; Clarendon's *History of the Revolution; Calendar of State Papers; MSS. Records of St Scholastica's Abbey, Teignmouth;* Lipscombe's *History of Buckinghamshire;* S. C. Hall's *Baronial Halls of England.*)

CHAPTER III

From the Opening of St Monica's to the Death of Mother Margaret Clement, 1609-1612.

We come next to our Sub-Prioress, of whom much mention hath already been made. She was daughter to (Sir) John Shirley of Shirley in Leicestershire, the chiefest house of that name, and sister to Sir George Shirley, Baronet; whose conversion, showing the great mercy of God, we will here set down. She was until twenty years of age brought up an earnest heretic, and being very sickly, her brother George, a good Catholic, was desirous to have her come to live with him, he being unmarried, and so she kept his house for six years till he was married, in which time it pleased God to induce her to the Catholic religion in this manner. She being exceeding obstinate in her opinion, the more her brother or any of her kindred, both priests and others, would seek to persuade her, the more perverse she remained, whereupon they gave her over to God's mercy. And here we may note what a pretty way the Divine wisdom took to allure this wandering soul to His service. It happened that she, governing her brother's house upon a time, stood in need of some tape or incle for some necessary thing, and there coming a poor woman to the door a-begging who could weave incle as the manner is in England, she agreed with her to weave her some, but she would be by her to see her warp it in the manner that she desired. There being no room long enough in the house, they went both to the church that stood right before



RELIQUARY, CONTAINING HAIR-SHIRT OF BLESSED THOMAS MORE.

Preserved at St Augustine's Priory.

[*Face page* 102.

the house, which was very long and large, for to warp the tape. The poor beggar-woman supposing her to be a Catholic, as the master of the house and all the rest were, and hoping perhaps to get some better alms by praising the old religion, as she termed it, began to discourse thereof; the other hearing it let her say what she would, esteeming it a base thing to contend with a beggar; who took first occasions to speak of the monuments of that same church wherein they were, which had not been much defaced, he being a Catholic that was lord of it. The woman said then that churches and such devout things as were there could not be made for this new religion. Moreover she recounted a strange thing which happened in her country in Derbyshire, saying she knew well all the parties. A woman being there in labour in the town where she dwelt, neighbours were called, as the manner is, and among them the minister's wife also came. The woman called upon our Blessed Lady, which the parson's wife hearing, forbade her to call any more upon that name, and at length threatened her that if she persisted she would take all the wives from her and she should be left alone.

But the good woman cried still, Blessed Mary, help me. Whereupon the minister's wife took away all the nurses. When they were gone she beheld a goodly Lady clothed all in white come into the chamber and approach near to her in the manner of a midwife, laid her in bed, and the child wrapped in clothes was laid decently by her, and then she vanished away. The minister's wife, thinking now that she had corrected herself and would no more call on our Blessed Lady as before, took the women and went in again, and when they all again came into the room, they found to their great amazement the woman laid in her bed and the child by her. The minister's wife being much astonished, and asking how she came to be so well, she answered that the Lady to whom she had called for help had done it, and presently the minister's wife was stricken stark blind, remaining still so at this present. When the beggar-woman related this, Elizabeth Shirley hearing it with good attention, and knowing the place herself, as also some of those whom the beggar named to be present at this strange miracle, answered the poor woman: Perhaps that might chance by some deceit; but the beggar confirmed it more earnestly, and said that some who saw this were wholly turned from their religion and could never more be induced to go to the church. Divers other things she declared that happened in that her country (of Derbyshire) concerning the ministers and their evil life, all which made such an impression on the other's heart, that she became greatly troubled in mind and knew not what to do, but being thus tormented in herself, dared not to utter it to anybody by reason that she had been so obstinate before in her false opinion. She, notwithstanding, would now secretly steal Catholic books of her companions, and read them by herself, which before she never would have looked into, yet did she not this, as she related since, with intention to profit thereby,' but to find something to cavil at, that she might quietly set herself as stiff as before. But Almighty God, who had cast a loving eye on her, of His infinite mercy and goodness did not leave the matter so, but still inwardly moved her more and more so that she could have no rest in herself. And thus greatly afflicted, one night going to bed and not being able to take any sleep, she kneeled down by the bedside and besought our Lord that he would vouchsafe to show her whether she were in the right way or no, and to cease that storm which so molested her. This she prayed with such a violent motion as if her heart would have broken, and after engaged to take some rest Then being fallen into a slumber she seemed to see a fine great bird or fowl, of all kind of fair glorious colours that pleased her mightily, which she to her seeming with all her brothers and sisters endeavoured earnestly to catch, but she only was the first that could touch or lay hand thereon, and therewith being frightened, she seemed to hear One say to her: Fear not for 'tis the Holy Ghost; and awaking therewith found herself wholly quieted. Whereupon she resolved to seek some means to be instructed in the truth, and so became a Catholic.

After this, loving still the world, yet by reason of her sickly body she could not take much pleasure therein, and being also wearied with travelling up and down for safety of conscience, at the last resolved with herself to take some course of religion, for she never had any mind to marry. Thus did the Divine goodness seek still to draw her nearer to Him by His holy inspiration. Wherefore at length over the seas she comes into these Low Countries. But here the devil laid a snare to divert her design, for being arrived at Antwerp and meeting there with a gentlewoman that was her old acquaintance, and one whom she loved very entirely, having discovered to her what intention she had, the other being very poor and hoping to make some advantage, having a great charge of children, persuaded her to sojourn with her and to leave her desire to religion; telling her many inconveniences and difficulties which she should find in the religious state, and especially in that cloister of St Ursula's at Louvain wherein she determined to enter. Our principiant in religion was hereupon much daunted, and began to determine her return into England, being very weak-minded. Which when she declared to her ghostly Father, he grieved thereat and persuaded her earnestly to tell him the cause that moved her, but she would in nowise do it, fearing the person might come into some discredit. He seeing nothing could be done for all his admonitions, at last broke out into these words, saying: "I do assure you, that if anybody through evil report hath thus averted your mind from the former good intention, they can never make satisfaction in this life, except they go into religion themselves." These words struck her to the heart, for our Lord had a care she should not wholly be overcome, and therefore made him to say this by the instinct of the Holy Ghost to cure the wound that was given her by this dangerous blow; for she hearing this and loving the other party so well, knowing her to be a married woman who could not take that state on her, it moved her so that she resolved again to go forward in her good purpose, how dear soever it might cost her, for she still had great fear and terror thereof. She went therefore to Louvain, but into the monastery she could not enter so soon, her conflicts were not yet crowned with victory. Wherefore she took a chamber in the house of Mrs Allen, who kept house then, her daughter being not married, and there she boarded herself and maid, who came with her out of England and had also desire to religion. Wherefore being loth to hinder her, she offered to put her into the cloister and to give her all things that she needed, which the maid refused and would in nowise enter unless she herself did enter, which also moved her much for she was loth to hinder the maid, though as yet she could not wholly resolve herself. Wherefore upon a time going to the Jesuits' church to hear Mass as her custom was, having first talked awhile with one of the Fathers who was her confessor, she went towards the high altar and there kneeling down before a devout picture of our Saviour, she burst out into such a vehement weeping as if her heart would have broken. Whereupon her ghostly Father coming up requested her to restrain such a violent motion, saying that people in the church would either think him to be very rigorous or that she had committed some great sin, yet hardly could she cease from weeping. At last lifting up her hands and eyes towards the picture, which indeed was a very devout one of our Lord crowned with thorns and His face bedewed with tears, at that time she supposed in her heart that our Saviour looking on her said three times: Fear nor, all will be well: and presently succeeded such a calm in her mind as could not be expressed and from thenceforward she never felt the least disquietness in this kind. After this she sent to the Rector, desiring to have the said picture for herself, giving him a better to set there in the place, and so she got it and carried it into the monastery with her, where she entered soon and the foresaid maid with her. After that, although the hard fare was at first some difficulty unto her, nevertheless through the good counsels and comfort of the old Mother she went through all in such wise that God concurred to give her far better health than she had before in this world, and was able to observe the Order in all strictness, so that she herself wondered thereat, knowing well the pusillanimity of her mind if God had not assisted her. She was professed in the year of our Lord 1596 upon St Nicholas of Tolentino's day, the 10th of September.

Unto this conversion and calling to religion of our first Sub-Prioress we will adjoin another of the elders, to wit, Sister Anne Bromfield, because it showeth evidently with what a powerful hand Almighty God calleth some unto him amidst all the pleasures of the world, and how the Divine wisdom having in the forementioned disposed things sweetly, in this disposed them strongly. She was daughter to Edward Bromfield, Esquire, in the county of Surrey, who living long a schismatic yet two years before his death was reconciled and died a good Catholic. After whose decease, his widow, named Catharine Fromans before her marriage, being a gentlewoman of very fine behaviour and having good friends, was called to the Court of Queen Elizabeth and made mother of the maids of honour, not being a Catholic as her deceased husband, but only well-minded. She then took this her daughter Anne to the Court at the age of sixteen, where for four years she gave herself wholly to the pleasures and delights of the world, yet so that being of a high mind and aiming at greater matches than her degree, she never was enthralled in the love of any man amidst the occasion of such a Court as that was. For Almighty God who intended to satisfy her aspiring mind with no less than Himself, and to bring her unto a higher estate than of any worldly nobility, permitted not His future spouse to be defiled with earthly love. But behold, against the time of a great marriage in the Court, when she supposed to have abundant pleasure and solace, suddenly all is turned quite contrary, for so great a cloud of affliction invadeth her mind and so deep a melancholy accompanied with horrible, desperate temptations, that all the pleasures of the Court were turned now into sorrows, her feasting into mourning, her tears poured forth amain whenever she could get out of company. And being once gotten alone, which was very hard to do in that place, and lamenting according to her custom her great misfortune that she could take comfort in nothing and knew not what would help her ; it came suddenly to her mind that she must leave the world and become a nun, having heard some speech in her infancy of religious houses and nuns in old time, as also had been taught her Pater Noster, Ave Maria, Creed, and Jesus Psalter, all which prayers worldly pleasures had not brought to oblivion. She, finding this motion in her mind and not knowing how to compass the same, being as yet no Catholic, neither had notice of religious houses, notwithstanding one day she disclosed it unto a person who put her quite out of thinking upon religion. Thereupon her mother desirous to help her, seeing her spend the night in tears as she lay by her, would give her to read a book of Catholic prayers, so that now affliction made her call to mind her old prayers. But nothing availed to comfort her, the Court was loathsome to her, all things disgustful, and she knew not what ailed her. Her mother hereupon sends her into the country to a married sister of hers to see if that would help her. But all recreation made her worse and worse, so that at length she thought by main violence to get her pleasure again in the world ; therefore desires her mother to send for her to the Court, which she did. But our Lord now would have the mastery, and therefore coming back to Court again, her afflictions are renewed, no contentment can enter into her mind, insomuch that looking out at window she thought a dog more happy than herself, because it had not trouble of mind.

Almighty God forgot her not in this case, but one day a gentleman that was a Catholic, though unknown, coming to the Court and seeing her so sad and melancholy, asked what she wanted. Whereunto she answered: She knew not what to do, nor what could help her, she was in such affliction of mind. He answered that he would bring her to one that would help her. She regarded not his words, being overwhelmed with affliction, but some days after, he coming there again she desired him for God's sake to bring her to one as he had said the other day, who thereupon brought her unto Father Garrett (Gerard) who instructed her in Catholic religion and reconciled her. Whereupon her mind was so quieted that she became contented, but yet she could take no pleasure in the world, therefore left the Court and lived as the said Father appointed order for her. At length she discovered to him how she was moved to undertake a religious state, and he very much applauded her mind and animated her therein. But then considering what Order to choose, she very much affected the Clarisses Order, until one day she felt it sensibly as it were said in her mind that she must go to St Ursula's, for she had long before heard one speak of such a cloister in Louvain. Whereupon Father Garrett (Gerard) sought for means to help her over, but being taken and clapped up in the Tower, he left order with Father Garnet his Provincial to help her, which he did, and sent her over with another, to wit, Sister Mary Welch. So that the day twelvemonth after she was reconciled to the Church she was on the sea for religion, and coming to Brussels they would fain have had them both for St Benedict's, which was then a-beginning, but their calling, they said, was to Louvain; therefore entered into St Ursula's and courageously there went forward in religion amidst all difficulties of the hard fare.

So doth Almighty God prevail with His grace as to make the strictness of hard poverty of more contentment than all the delights of princes' courts, even in the age of most flourishing youth.

But notwithstanding, according to nature, difficulty sometimes happened therein, as once upon a Christmas Day, having been much tired out with singing in the Choir all the long Matins in the night, and the solemn service in the morning, coming to dinner she expected that at least on such a day they should have a little better diet than ordinary, having fasted all the Advent with great strictness. Seeing nothing then but a poor little piece of boiled beef, about two fingers' breadth, she felt it hard to undergo. But yet God's grace prevailed above this and other things, so that she was professed and willingly undertook this hardness for God's sake, upon the Holy Cross Day, the 3rd of May 1599, together with Sister Mary Welch and Sister Susan Laborne and now was one of the second company that came hither from St Ursula's as hath been declared at large.

Wherefore to go on with our history : in this year 1610, about Whitsuntide, one of the Dutch lay-sisters of St Ursula's Monastery had so great a desire to come and live here with the English, that hearing the Bishop was in town, she made no more ado but went herself to him and humbly besought him to give her leave to go and live at St Monica's. He asked her whether she knew they would be content to take her there, and those of her own cloister to let her depart. She answered that if he pleased to give her licence she doubted not but to get their goodwill hereunto. Whereupon he gave her free licence that if she could obtain the consent of both cloisters she might go. With this grant of the Archbishop she found that those of St Ursula's were content to let her depart having lay-sisters enough besides, and our nuns of St Monica's wanting help for their work were content to take her. And so upon the 17th of June 1610, she was fetched hither by Catherine Noe, who was very glad to have a sister to assist her in the labours of the house ; her name was Frances Blase, whose

LADY MARGARET RADCLIFFE.

Daughter of Francis Radcliffe, first Earl of Derwentwater, wife of Sir Philip Constable of Everingham, Bart.

[illegible]. By kind permission of Lord Herries.

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father lived in town and left us £10 at his death for having received his daughter among us.

This year, 1610, entered into the monastery upon the 4th day of July two sisters, Mary and Helen Copley, nieces to the old Mother, daughters of William Copley of Gatton, in the county of Surrey, son and heir of the Lord Thomas Copley, Baron of Welles, which said Thomas in his youth fell into heresy, although he had been brought up a Catholic by the old Lady Copley, his mother, daughter of the Lord Chief-Justice of England, and continued a hot heretic in the time of Queen Mary, when all were Catholics, yet afterwards by reading of controversy, for he was a great scholar, and finding it evidently proved how the Protestants did falsify the Word of God in their translations, he was so moved thereat through God's grace, as he turned again into the right way even then when most part of the realm went into error, to wit, in the time of Queen Elizabeth's reign. Then did he become a most constant Catholic and suffered much for the faith, going into voluntary banishment to enjoy the freedom of his conscience. For by reason that the Lord Chamberlain, the Queen's uncle, was his sore enemy, he having refused to marry his sister and taken for wife one of Sir John Luttrell's daughters, an heir of the blood royal, who for her beauty liked him better, in respect of this he knew well that becoming a Catholic the other would have fit opportunity continually to molest him for his conscience, therefore came over seas into France and these Low Countries; at which time the Lord Chamberlain hastened unto his manor-house of Gatton, and confiscated his goods, taking away, besides plate, so much armour as they say would have furnished hundreds of men, and in the house so fair a library of books that he pleasured therewith the universities of England, insomuch as for some days there were still waggons going and coming to carry away the goods which he rifled. The said Thomas Copley hearing all this, like another Job exercised the virtue of patience in suffering for so good a cause. At length after some years he died in those parts, leaving his second son, William, heir of his land ; for the eldest son being so brave a gentleman that the King of France had already made him Knight, he died at nineteen years of age of a pleurisy at Paris in France. William Copley then after his father's decease, coming into England to enjoy his inheritage, being not twenty-one years of age, and finding that to pass the Court of Wards he must take the oath of supremacy, not having yet experience how to escape that danger as others do, determined rather than to commit such an offence against Almighty God to venture the loss of all his land for his lifetime, so that he might enjoy freedom of his conscience. Wherefore behold in this resolution this constant youth most loyal to God letteth forth all his houses for small rents, taking fines in the place ; so maketh a good sum of money and over seas he comes with one trusty servant and goeth into Spain, where God ordained that he got a pension in respect that his father's worthiness had been well known to strangers. There also he married with the daughter of Thomas Prideaux, an Esquire of Devonshire, and of Helen Clement, sister unto the old Mother, who all lived there in voluntary banishment for the safety of their conscience. This daughter of theirs named Magdalen Prideaux whom he married had in her childhood been brought up for some time in the cloister of St Ursula's under her aunt's government, as her mother also had lived there before with her sister Margaret learning virtue, although both the mother and daughter had no calling to religion. Which said Magdalen being her parent's only daughter, had education to many rare qualities, for she was a fine musician both in song and instruments, had the Latin tongue perfect, also poetry, and was skilful in the art of painting, a woman indeed wise, and pious in godly matters. In the meantime the Queen seizeth upon his living, and gave it away to a cousin-german of his that lived in her Court, named Sir William Lane.

For the space of seventeen years the said William Copley enjoyed not one penny of his estate, but having four children of this his marriage, he maintained them only by his pension, and at the coming of the Infanta with Albert the Archduke of Austria to the Princes of these Low Countries, he got his pension transferred into these quarters for to be the nearer home. At which time his wife made a voyage into England to see if she could by some composition get again his estate. She left her eldest daughter in that space at St Ursula's with her aunt Prioress, to be brought up, taking the second daughter with her. The child stayed about two years in the monastery, from the age of seven till nine, and there got a great desire to religion, for Almighty God bestowed a calling on her in that tender age, which He had not given either to her mother or grandmother. After this notwithstanding, she was taken forth against her will, for she would gladly have stayed there still; but her father said he would have her to see the world, and when she came to years, if her desire to religion continued, he would not hinder her, as indeed he did not. Her mother, after three years' labour in the said business, returned out of England without doing any good, for so long as the Queen lived nothing was to be gotten. About two years after her return the Queen died, and then they both with all her children, went into England, seeing that by the general pardon at the new King's coming, his fault of fugacy was pardoned, and now the land was by the law his own. Nevertheless so did his kind cousin stand against him, and prevailed so much with the law, the other being a Catholic, that he could by no means get into his own right until he had compounded with the said cousin of his for the living, and assured him £2000 before he would part with it, and to pay this sum he was enforced to sell a manor, that which alone had made him a ward. So, having obtained his estate, he suffered notwithstanding the troubles and afflictions incident to Catholics, and at this present payeth the statute of £20 a month. When therefore, his daughters were now of years to undertake any state, the eldest being eighteen, her mind to religion continued still, for although through the vanities of the world she was allured to leave her intention, yet the continued counsels and advices of their virtuous parents helped her much, as also the reading of good books made her at length fully resolve to become religious, and her sister Helen hearing her mother and sister to commend monastical life, determined also to come over to see the same and try if she liked it. Being both of this mind they thought to have gone to St Benedict's Order at Brussels where some of their kindred were, rather than to go to St Ursula's which was in such want and poverty; but hereupon they understood how the English were come forth thence, and had set up this monastery of St Monica, wherefore they resolved to come hither unto their old acquaintance.

But one thing must not be omitted, to wit, that coming over, our Lord would have them make public confession of their faith; for lying at the inn in Southwark, expecting to depart with a widow that went under the Spanish Ambassador's charge, in the meantime there was much ado in London, in searching of houses upon news that the King of France was killed. Wherefore, the innkeeper's wife, having one night disputed with the eldest of these two sisters, and finding she was too hard for her in matters of religion, confounding her even by the Bible, upon which she still harped; whether she had given notice to the officers of them no one knoweth, but one night when they were abed, there comes a justice of peace with many men, and in they would come. They refusing to open the door, being about midnight, they threatened to break it open. Wherefore the two sisters not knowing what might happen, took such Catholic books as they had into the bed with them, as also the money for their voyage (and it was wisely done), leaving only one vain book of Virgil's, that was taken away and they saw it no more. So laying themselves still, they desired their old nurse, who had come out of Spain for their sakes, and was now to come over with them to open the door. Then came into the room many men, and drew open the curtains. They lay still; the justice of peace sat him down by the bedside, and asked of them of what religion they were, and whether they went to church. The eldest answered, That they were well known in Southwark to be recusants, for their father hath one manor, and many houses there. Then he asked if they would go to the church? She answered, No. He asked again, Why? She answered, Because she would not be a dissembler, to be in her mind of one religion and make a show of another. He hearing this, could not tell what to say, but having demanded the cause of their coming to London, finding nothing to make against her but her constant resolution not to go to church, asked of the younger sister if she was also of the same mind, who answered, Yea. Then he willed them to stay in that inn till they heard further from him, and their man, who lay in another chamber, he took and sent to prison; but in respect of their father being well known there, he did not send them to prison, and so departed. After this they sent their mother word, who lived but fourteen miles off, what had happened; who came speedily up and speaking with the justice got them freed. So that within a few days they came away with the foresaid widow, and the good mother had a new grief at the parting with her children; for having no more daughters but them, according to nature she felt it most heavy to part from both. But for the love of God and their greater good, she overcame herself, and went with them even to the Thames side, though before she wished them to depart without her knowledge, for she could not find in her heart to take leave of them, yet now she saw them take boat with heavy heart. Their man was still detained in prison, until that by means of the Dutch Ambassador they got him released, being a stranger born, of the Dutch nation, who came after and overtook them here at Louvain.

But they, after this brunt, had a prosperous journey and were kindly received, first at St Omer's by Dr

Redmond (Redman), their cousin, a Canon there of that church, and great friend of this house, as also at Brussels by Dr Clement, their cousin, who came with them himself to Louvain, and at their arrival the eldest sister knew and remembered her old acquaintance ; so they were received into the monastery with much joy, especially of the old Mother, their great-aunt, who felt them though she could not see them.

This year some English persons of worth came over to these parts : as Mrs Suthcoat (Southcote), Sister Mary Welch's uncle, and Mrs Brooksbie, a young widow, our Reverend Mother's niece, daughter to Sir William Wiseman, her brother, both being come here to Louvain to see their friends.

We now removed from our forementioned little choir, and made the next place unto the gallery to serve both for a choir and church, taking all that room which is over our refectory for it, so that now our choir was of some reasonable greatness, and the little chapel served besides for some priest or other to say Mass during the service when they came. Moreover, we brought a great bell, for before we had only that which we now ring to the refectory withal (costing about £10), so that upon the Dedication of our Saviour, the 9th of November, we sang the first Mass in this our little church, and the Abbot who had sold us the house would needs sing this himself. But the accommodating of the place to make it a convenient choir with lectionaries and the altar, as also removing of doors, and breaking of walls for it, did cost us about £80 in all, and God of His goodness assisted us still with means.

Upon the day of our Blessed Lady's Presentation in November the same year (1610), entered into our monastery Jane Hatton, daughter of Ralph Hatton, dwelling in Buckinghamshire ; her mother was a Justice of Peace's daughter. Which couple having ten children, this was the youngest, and both her parents and all their children being Protestants, it pleased the Divine goodness to call the youngest of all unto Him; being brought up so ignorantly that she knew not of our Lord's Passion, till one day hearing an Irish beggar-woman say something thereof and showing a picture of Christ which she carried about her, this said Jane would fain have bought the image of the woman for she felt her heart in love with Him that had suffered for her, but the poor woman would not part with it by any means.

After this, hearing one of their servants speak in praise of our Blessed Lady, she asked who that woman was, both a Virgin and a Mother, and understanding that she was the Mother of Christ, took thereupon a devotion to her. After this although many years passed before she became a Catholic, yet she would do all her work in the honour of Him that died for her, and also desired our Blessed Lady with all her heart that she would be her Mother. For she never knew her own mother, by reason that she died when this her youngest child was at nurse; and so she hoped that she should one day come to be our Lady's child indeed, but as yet knew not of the Catholic religion, more than that sometimes she heard the parson and her father talk together of recusants, how they lost their goods because they would not go to church. Whereupon she thought surely they had some great reason for it, or else they would not lose so much, and in the end determined herself to become a Catholic, if she could get leave from her father, but he did still urge her to marry and set her brothers and sisters to persuade her, as desiring to see her bestowed in his lifetime. But she had no mind at all thereto, and would answer them that she hoped to be provided for as well as they, and that God would bestow her better than they, and no other answer could they get of her. Her father at length began to fear she would be a recusant, and set Mr Parson on her, as also himself fell a-weeping, being an aged man of almost a hundred years old. But our Lord assisted her, so that all their persuasions could not divert her mind, for she was quite out of love with their religion, and could not tell what to do with herself. But that Sovereign Goodness who presideth everywhere, and ordaineth fit means for those to come to Him whom He hath chosen, disposed matters so that one day a young gentlewoman, who after was our Sister Mary Scidmoor (Scudamore), coming to her father's house upon some occasion, and seeing her pensive and sad, suspected it was about religion. Wherefore she would have gotten her away from her father to come and keep Christmas at a house where she knew she could help her to be reconciled, but he fearing she would make his daughter a papist, would by no means let her depart.

Notwithstanding, a while after he let her go to another place which was but one mile off from this her dearest friend, and so being come there she got means to have access to the forenamed young gentlewoman, who examined her why she was so sad. She answered, because she knew not how to serve God. Hereupon the other began to teach her Ave Maria and also the Ten Commandments, and how to examine her conscience, and told her if she would be a Catholic she must confess all her sins unto a priest. She was content to do so, desiring her to teach her how, which the other did, and also brought her unto a priest, who reconciled her to the Catholic Church. But after this, having no quiet with her father about going to church, at length he died, and then she was her own woman, and had her portion in hands. Whereupon knowing that her forenamed friend was come over to be religious, desiring much to imitate and follow her steps, she got measures to come over with Mrs Brooksby, our Mother's niece, as her waiting gentlewoman, and so was received into our monastery.

This year also about Christmas died the old gentlewoman that lived in this house, and thereupon we had all the rooms wholly to ourselves, as also the outhouses which she had let out to two women, which hire was then void; and so they departed and we enjoyed the house freely, and accommodated it after another manner, as was more convenient for us. Upon St John Evangelist's day in Christmas time, was professed Catharine Noe, lay-sister, of whom we have before made mention.

This same year the two Copleys' eldest brother came over to pass his course of Philosophy in this town, and boarded with our fathers, and with him was companion at school another young gentleman named Mr Baker, who afterwards going into Spain intended to be a priest, but died first, and at his death left to our monastery £100 for his former acquaintance' sake. But the foresaid Thomas saw his sisters clothed this year upon the 23rd of January, and sometime after their profession himself entered into the Society of Jesus, leaving his inheritance unto his second brother William, taking our Lord for his part and portion. About this time a very rich man of London named Mr Barram (? Barham) coming over to these parts and desiring to do some good deeds before his death, having lived some time a schismatic, Almighty God moved him to help our cloister, and he gave us at once unexpected £100, which was a good alms, and assisted us very well in these our beginnings.

1611. This year, upon St Ann's day came from St Ursula's one nun more, to wit, Sister Mary Best, who having long desired to be here, had now gotten of Mr Porrege, a kinsman of hers in England, £100 for to help her to come unto this cloister, and thereupon was admitted by our convent with leave and licence of the Archbishop; she was elder in religion than any here, and upon St Ann's Feast, being her profession day, she came to her great joy, as also an English lay-sister named Margaret Offspring came some two or three days after. For in respect that there was but one lay-sister there of our nation, we were content to have her here to help us in the household work. They both vowed obedience to our Reverend Mother at their coming, as the manner is, being freed by the Bishop from their obedience in St Ursula's Monastery. So now there remained of our English nuns only four, to wit, Sister

Frances Felton, Sister Eleanor Garnett, Sister Ann Rookwood, and Sister Ann Clitherow, daughter to Mrs Clitherow the martyr that was pressed to death in Queen Elizabeth's reign at York; of which four none ever came hither, but died all there very blessedly, leaving behind them in that cloister much edification of virtue and also note of sanctity.

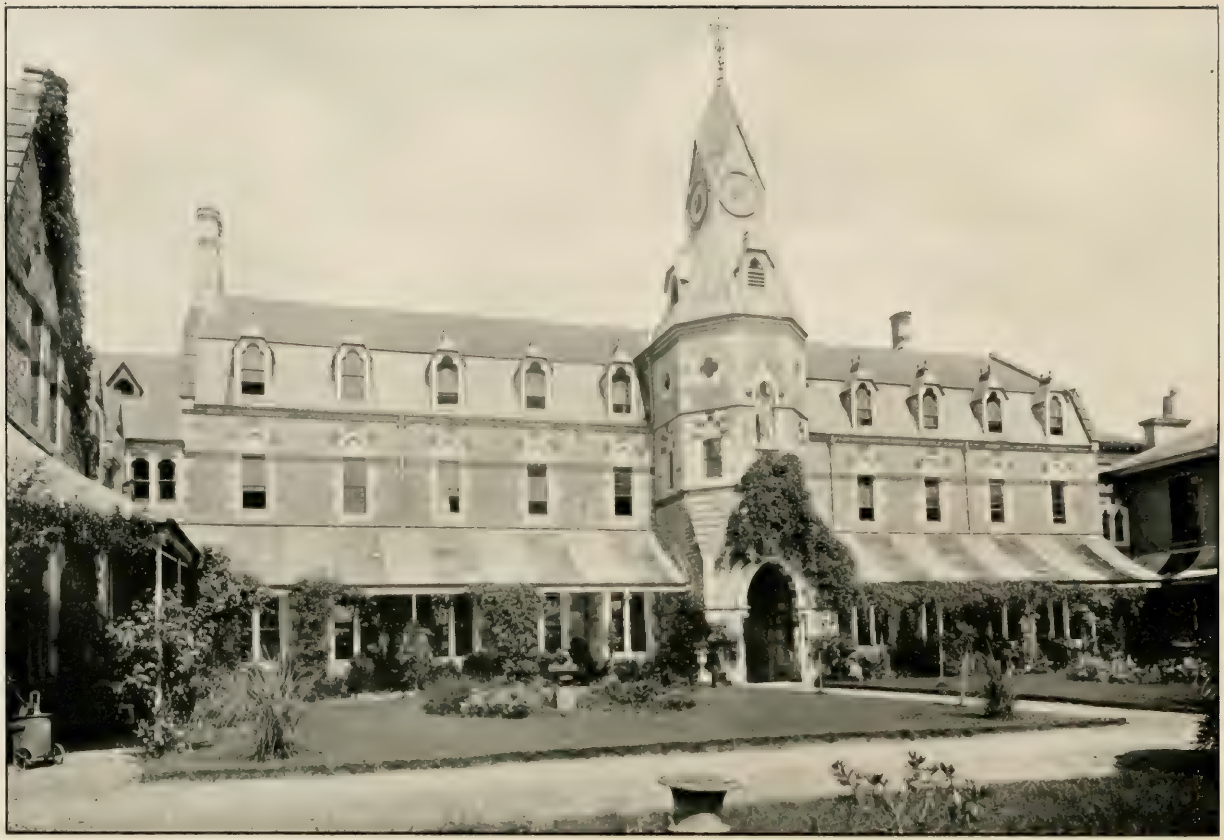
1611. Upon St Lawrence's day entered our monastery a niece of Sister Barbara Wilford's, named Margaret Throckmorton, daughter unto John Throckmorton of Coughton, Warwickshire, Esquire, and a famous Catholic, of great kindred and fair estate, keeping house like a nobleman, insomuch that when any stirs were in the realm he was presently clapped up in prison, by reason that being so mighty in the shire it was feared he might raise a commotion, and therefore was kept down with paying the statute and other molestations, and also confined to his house and five miles about. His son died before he came to inherit, being a virtuous and good Catholic, as also his wife, daughter to Mr Wilford of Essex, who after the death of her husband continued a widow, doing many good deeds in inducing of Protestants to be reconciled, receiving and relieving of priests, bringing up her children in the fear of God, of which this daughter being the eldest, our Lord took such means to choose her for Himself, as by permitting her to be more ensnared in the world than the rest, made her more heroically to leave it. For coming to live in London with my Lady Roper who was her aunt, and remaining there as companion to her cousin Ann Roper; Sir William Roper and his wife came into these parts that he might escape taking the oath and also be reconciled, for he had gone to church, and this his niece coming to these parts was moved by God to enter into religion. But being beset with manifold difficulties to hinder her, she durst not disclose her mind to her friends, but at length, coming to Louvain with my Lady Roper to see her aunt Wilford that was a religious here, she yet disclosed not her intention, and went with her company to Sichem. Being there with our Lady she determined with herself to put her design into execution, and departed from them saying she would come for awhile to stay at Louvain with her aunt, while they went to France, neither would she have any one to come with her hither, as intending to shake off all hindrances, but came herself alone in the waggon, and was admitted into the cloister treading the world valiantly under foot, and all enticing allurements. Whereof she wanted not store, for leaving many great matches which attended only her consent, she wisely and piously chose for Spouse Him who is *Speciosus forma præ filiis hominum.* Beautiful of form above the sons of men. Thus doth Almighty God allure unto Himself even those whom the world fawneth most upon, to be glorified in His chosen servants and dearest spouses.

This year also upon the 22nd of October, being the Feast of our Holy Father St Augustine's Translation, came hither our Rev. Father Stephen Barnes to be Confessarius, Priest and Bachelor of Divinity, in respect that Father Fenn, our forementioned Father, through old age was not able to perform the place ; who notwithstanding remained here with us all his lifetime, our faithful friend and good benefactor, as shall be declared more hereafter. We builded this year our narrow dormitory which standeth raised in the little court, making all the place that looketh into the orchard into cells, which before was a pleasant long gallery, because, our company increasing we wanted lodging.

In the year 1612 upon the 8th of May, being the Feast of St Michael's Apparition, were professed the old Mother's nieces, Mary and Helen Copley, having passed some few months above their year of noviceship, because their cousin, Dr Clement, would needs have them stay until their cousin Redmund (Redman) might also come from St Omer's to their profession. Which delay grieved the good old Mother, for she feared lest she might die before their profession, but our Lord prolonged her life to give her her heart's desire before her happy departure hence. Wherefore after the Feast of their profession was past and her nephew Redmund (Redman) departed, she desired of our Reverend Mother upon the Thursday sennight after her nieces' profession that they might have at night recreation in the refectory for the last of the Feast, which was willingly granted her. At which time, she desired of our Superior sitting at table, that she would give her leave now to sing like a swan before her death, which she freely gave her licence to do. And then the worthy old Mother, from the exceeding joy and jubilation of her heart, sang a devout song of Jesus, which made one of the elders to weep that sat near her, and she also said that now she left unto us these her two pledges in her place, as also had before said to one of her nieces that she felt exceeding joy to think that when she was above enjoying the sight of the Blessed Trinity, she should leave them here on earth to praise our Lord God. She asked them after their profession whether they were well contented, and they answered they were. Especially one of them told her that she enjoyed great peace of mind, which made the worthy old Mother exceeding glad. So that now Almighty God having given her this last comfort after her faithful service, would no longer detain her in this life, but bring her to a better; wherefore upon the very next Friday, being in the choir with the rest at a Dirge, she was taken extreme sick, yet she made a hard shift to stay out the Dirge, showing her love to the Divine Service even to the last, after which it was time to have her in bed, for she had a sore ague with a pleurisy, which although she was let blood, yet it brought her unto a blessed end.

Of whose memorable life and virtues we omit to speak more here, because it is written at large in a book by itself. After this, her nephew, Dr Clement, was sent for hither again from Brussels, who came to her burial, which was performed with due solemnity, and a Father of the Society of Jesus, a worthy preacher, made her funeral sermon, showing therein her excellent virtues, to the glory of God and edification of all.

This year also on the 30th of September, St Jerome's day, was professed Sister Monica Hatton, at the age of thirty-two years. Upon the 17th of November one of our first sisters followed the old Mother, to wit, Sister Catharine Allen, who died with great pain of the stone, which she had been many years troubled with, being a good and virtuous religious, and imitated the example of her worthy mother, who lost all her goods and living in England for her conscience. Being a widow and coming into such trouble for her brother's sake, who after was Cardinal, that all she had was confiscated, there was also commandment given none should harbour or relieve her, insomuch that she was forced to come over this side the seas with her children, and suffered for a while great want and penury. But the goodness of God, which setteth a limit unto the tribulations of the just, provided so well for her that the Catholic King of Spain having notice of her losses for the faith, allowed her a good pension whereby she lived very well, and all the children were provided for by their uncle the Cardinal; the two eldest daughters becoming religious in St Ursula's Monastery, and the youngest was well married to Mr Worthington. Her son dying in these parts, she herself lived to her death a most godly and virtuous life, communicating every Thursday, besides Sundays and holy days, and fasting every Wednesday, excepting when St Elizabeth's day fell thereon, whose name she had; as also she rose daily at 4 in the morning, and from 5 till 9 continued in the church at her prayers, and upon holy days passed almost all the time in her devotions. She afflicted her body with sharp hair-cloth and other penances, and would give some alms to all that asked it of her. Wherefore when she went to church the beggars attended about her, but the boys or children she would not give alms unto until they had heard Mass in her sight, which they to get money were contented to do. She also spun hard upon workdays, and kept silence at her work, saying some prayers, and all the linen which she made of her spinning she distributed either unto religious or needy persons, and at length by a painful sickness she happily rested in our Lord. She lies buried in our monastery, according to her desire, among the nuns.



St Augustine's Priory. (Front View. South.)

[Face page 125.

PREFACE TO CHAPTER THE FOURTH

A group of Catholic families under the Stuarts. Cliffords, Thimelbys, and Astons. Sir Thomas Lucy ("Justice Shallow") and his descendants. William Blundell, "the Cavalier." The Lords Windsor of Bradenham. The Rev. John Bolt. Queen Elizabeth's Chapel. Thomas, Earl of Southampton, and his sisters. The families of Pounde and Brittan.

The pleasing memories associated with the Cliffords of Brackenbury, Thimelbys of Irnham, and Astons of Tixall, which three families were allied by marriage, afford a measure of relief to the saddening though heroic annals of so many devoted Catholic houses in the cruel times of Protestant oppression.

It must have been about the year 1612, that Mrs Elizabeth Clifford, a self-exiled English lady, resident at St Omer's, returning from a visit to the sanctuary of our Lady of Sichem, came to Louvain in Holy Week, and stayed in the town for a fortnight. Mrs Clifford is described in the Louvain Records as the daughter of John Thimelby, Esquire, of Irnham in Lincolnshire, and widow of Henry Clifford of Brackenbury, in the same county, who had died on a journey to Spain, undertaken in company with his relative, George Clifford, third Earl of Cumberland. The devout lady, not liking to lodge at an inn, got leave to stay in the guest-house attached to the English convent. At midnight she heard the bell calling the nuns from their beds to choir. Forthwith an irresistible attraction to the cloister took possession of her, and she died a nun at St Monica's in 1642. With Elizabeth Clifford's vocation begins the connection of our community with the noble houses of Clifford and Aston, and with the ancient family of Thimelby. To avoid confusion in the sequel I must give their family histories in brief, and have first to trace the descent of the Brackenbury Cliffords, whom we find in the Low Countries in the seventeenth century, from the main stock of that illustrious family.

In the times immediately following the Norman Conquest, the family of Fitzponts, sprung from the Counts of Eu, built themselves in Herefordshire a castle on the Welsh marches, which, possibly from its proximity to a cliff and a ford, was known as Castle Clifford. Robert, the fifth Lord of Castle Clifford, surnamed "de Appleby," was in 1299 appointed Captain-General and King's lieutenant in the northern counties, and Sheriff of Westmoreland. Thither the family transferred its residence from Herefordshire, so that some writers style them Cliffords of Westmoreland from this time forward; Shakespeare, who has made us familiar with them at this part of their history, calls them Cliffords of Cumberland. A son of Robert de Appleby was Canon of Exeter in 1321, and in Bishop Grandisson's Register, Peter, Reginald, and Walter de Clifford appear among the clergy of his diocese. Vocations to the priesthood and the cloister have been numerous in the family; Richard Clifford, Bishop of London, was among the thirty prelates whom the Council of Constance added to the College of Cardinals for the election of a Pope to end the Western Schism, was the first to propose Cardinal Colonna, elected as Martin V., and was the officiating Bishop in whose presence Henry V. laid the first stone of Syon Monastery. The late Bishop Clifford of Clifton was but one of a long line of Cliffords of Ugbrooke, who consecrated themselves to God in the ecclesiastical state.

John, the seventh from Robert de Appleby, had a younger brother, Sir Lewis, the ancestor of the Barons of Ugbrooke. Seduced for a time by the Lollards, he soon returned to the obedience of the faith. His confession and repentance, expressed in his last will, are exquisitely touching. This John, Lord Clifford, by his wife, Elizabeth Percy, Hotspur's daughter, had several children. His eldest son and successor, Thomas, is Shakespeare's "Proud northern lord, Clifford of Cumberland" slain at the battle of St Alban's in 1455, to whom succeeded his fierce and warlike son, John, the most dreaded foe to the House of York. On the eve of the battle of Towton, at Dittingdale, between Towton and Scarthingwell, as Clifford had loosened his gorget, an arrow pierced his throat, and he immediately expired, on 29th March 1461.

His third son, Sir Thomas, an infant at the date of his father's death, married Ellen, daughter of John Swarby of Brackenbury in Lincolnshire. Thomas Clifford of Brackenbury, presumably their son, who died in 1574, was the father of Henry of Brackenbury, whose second wife was our Sister Elizabeth Clifford, left a widow in 1598 when she was thirty-three years of age. Her father's name is given in our MS. as John, in others as Richard, Thimelby or Thimbleby of Irnham in Lincolnshire. She had at least seven children by her marriage with Henry Clifford. Five died young; of the two who survived their mother, the younger, Mr Henry Clifford of Antwerp, often occurs in our annals as "our good friend Mr Clifford." Concerning Sister Elizabeth's eldest son, William, a priest of the secular clergy, I must here say a few words.

Educated at Douay, he succeeded in establishing on a firm basis the English College at Lisbon, and was in consequence entrusted by the Bishop of Chalcedon with the government of Tournay College, founded for the English clergy by Cardinal Richelieu at Paris. Among his scholars were Bishop Leyburn, and Dr Gage, President of Douay. His love of prayer and retirement made him solicit the chaplaincy of the Hospital of Incurables at Paris. Here he wrote his two manuals of piety: *The Little Manual of the Poor Man's Devotion*, of which the nuns at St Augustine's possess a copy, and *The Christian Rules*, of which there is a copy in the library at Ugbrooke. Abbot Montague, brother to the Earl of Manchester, was his intimate friend. In a biography prefixed to the *Manual*, I read: "When this humble priest saluted the Abbot at his first entrance with these words: *My Lord you are come to help me to die;* the Abbot replied: *No, Mr Clifford, I have come to learn of you how to live.* Abbot Montague frequently visited him in his last sickness, and when he was near his end, he urged him, by many obliging expressions to signify what he should do for him. The holy man for some time remained silent. But the good Abbot pressing again the same question, Mr Clifford answered him in these words: *My Lord, the only thing I desire of your Lordship is that you will build a hive for St Peter's Bees;* meaning thereby a house for the English clergy. The Abbot promised to comply with his request." This holy priest died in the odour of sanctity at Paris in 1670.

As our Chronicle mentions George, Earl of Cumberland, as a kinsman of Henry Clifford of Brackenbury, I must add a word to explain their relationship. John, Lord Clifford, slain the day before the battle of Towton, was attainted in the same year. His eldest son, Henry, to save his life from Yorkist vengeance, was secretly conveyed away and entrusted to some faithful Cumbrian shepherds. Till the reversal of the attainder at the accession of Henry VII. he lived with these lowly friends; hence his surname of the "Shepherd lord." Twenty-five years later he emerged from the Cumberland Fells, almost illiterate, but of vigorous intellect and great natural gifts. His descendant, Lady Anne Clifford, calls him "a plain man, who lived for the most part a country life, and came seldom either to Court or London, except when called to Parliament where he behaved himself like a wise and good English nobleman." Much of his time in after-life was given to study under the tuition of the Austin Canons of Bolton. But in his sixtieth year he armed his followers against the Scots and held high command in the English army at Flodden, where, as the old poem has it:

> "From Penigent to Pendle Hill
> From Linton to Long Aldingham,
> And all that Craven coasts did till.
> They with the lusty Clifford came;
> All Stancliffe hundred went with him,
> With striplings strong from Wharledale
> And all that Hanton hills did climb . . .
> All such as Horton fells had fed
> On Clifford's banner did attend."

His son, Henry, was the first of that line of Earls of Cumberland, of whom George, referred to in our Chronicles, was the third and the most distinguished. With the exception of the first who in his will commends himself "to Blessed Marie," and orders Masses to be said for him, they seem to have been Protestants; the fifth and last Earl of Cumberland died in 1643. In Whitaker's *History of Craven* is a beautiful engraving of the portraits of Earl George and his family, from a painting in Skipton Castle. The historian was present when the family tomb was opened in 1803, and remarks that "the face was so entire, only turned to copper-colour, as closely to resemble his portraits." In the biography of the Rev. William Clifford, above quoted, I read that "He might justly have assumed the title of Lord Clifford" (after the death of the last Earl of Cumberland), "but so great was his humility, that nothing displeased him more than to hear this mentioned."

The Cliffords of Brackenbury constantly figure in the Louvain annals as among the noblest and most munificent benefactors of our Canonesses, to whom both the brothers at death left large legacies. I find also large gifts from the widow of Mr Henry Clifford of Antwerp, but cannot find her name nor trace this branch of the family further.

At Irnham in the county of Lincoln, "Thimbleby that now is, hath a fair place," writes old Leland. Out of the five sisters of St Monica's, who by descent or marriage belong to the family of Thimelby, or Thimbleby, of Irnham, two have been already noticed: to wit, Sister Elizabeth Clifford, and Sister Gertrude Thimelby. The other three were: Sister Winifred Thimelby, "the most loved of all the Mothers," as our records say, who was the third Prioress of St Monica's; her sister Frances, and their niece Sister Catherine Aston, daughter of the Honourable Herbert Aston and of Catherine Thimelby. The name of this dear old Catholic Lincolnshire family became extinct in 1720. Its later history has been briefly sketched by Father Morris, S.J., in his preface to "Two Ancient Treatises on Purgatory," in the *Quarterly Series;* from our MSS. I have ventured to supplement his historical notes.

Pelham, in the same county of Lincoln, was the ancient seat of the Thimelbys. Irnham, formerly Gerneham, had at the Conquest been occupied by the Paynells, till in King John's reign, a fair daughter of the house of Paynell became the bride of Sir Geoffrey Lutterell, and brought with her as her dowry the Lordship of Irnham. The home of the Lutterells it remained till near the close of the fifteenth century—I cannot find the exact date—when Richard Thimelby of Pelham took to wife the heiress of Sir Andrew Lutterell, from which time forward the Thimelbys of Pelham became Thimelbys of Irnham—that is to say, for the next two centuries and a quarter.

At this point there is a discrepancy between Father Morris's authorities and the Louvain records. Both are agreed on Richard Thimelby of Pelham marrying the Lutterell heiress, and both state that another Richard Thimelby wedded Mary Brooksby, a niece of the celebrated Anne Vaux. Father Morris makes this latter the son of the elder Richard, which would interpose a period of at least a century and a quarter from the marriage of the father to the death of his son and heir. Our records make the younger Richard the son, not of Richard, but of John Thimelby, who was presumably the son of the elder Richard. Concerning this John of Irnham, from whom the Louvain story starts, we learn from our MS. some interesting details. The family had for a brief time yielded to the fury of the Elizabethan persecution, and had become what in those days was known as a "schismatic" family. But John Thimelby of Irnham "became a Catholic about 1580, and was most constant after his conversion, living fifty years in persecution and being almost one hundred years at his death." He had two children, a son and a daughter. The latter was our Sister Elizabeth, the widow of Henry Clifford of Brackenbury. The son, Richard, who died in 1624, married Mary, daughter of Edward Brooksby and of Eleanor, daughter of Lord Vaux of Harrowden, so that through Sister Elizabeth Clifford our community came to be connected with the heroic Anne Vaux, Mrs Brooksby's sister, who had so large a share in the sufferings of the martyred Father Garnett. Richard Thimelby and Mary Brooksby had fourteen children. Thenceforward the family history is singularly pleasing, as, despite the storms of persecution they lived at their peaceful home in exceptional tranquillity, and their family correspondence breathes a spirit of the most amiable piety united to the pursuit of letters. The eldest son of Richard was Sir John Thimelby, Knt., who married a daughter of the Viscount of Rock-Savage. Their son, John, married the daughter of Lord Petre, and was the last of his name, dying in 1720. William and Henry, Sir John's brothers, entered the English College in Rome, but the latter at least did not take Holy Orders, and eventually married Gertrude Aston, who died a nun of St Monica in 1668. Richard Thimelby, S.J., another brother of Sir John, the author of a beautiful work on Purgatory edited by Father Morris, was Superior of the Jesuits in Lincolnshire, his native county, and afterwards Rector of St Omer's, where he died in 1680. His brother, Robert, died a student in the same college. Another brother, Edward, Provost of St Gery in Cambray, departed this life in 1690. Of their sisters, Elizabeth married Richard Conquest, to whose family Irnham passed in 1720; Mary became the wife of Sir Richard Persall, Knt.; Anne and Helen died unmarried, Dorothy in infancy; Winifred and Frances were nuns at Louvain; and Catherine married Herbert Aston, as already said. Several of the family were noted for their poetic talent and their works are to be found in the volume of *Tixall Poetry*, published by A. Clifford. Of other relations, we find the names of Charles, slain at Worcester; of Robert and Nicholas, officers in the Royal army killed during the Civil War; and of Gabriel Thimelby who died in prison for the faith. From Father Bridgewater's work on the English persecution we learn the following, which I transcribe from the translation in Foley's *Records*. It relates to the city of Lincoln in 1581. "A lady of noble birth, and young, having first obtained permission, entered the prison to visit her husband, who was incarcerated there for cause of religion. Being known to the gaoler, and thus caught in his net laid for her, he ordered her also to be detained a prisoner. Mrs Thimelby, either from the shock caused by this inhumanity and perfidy, or else from the foul air of the place, was seized with severe sickness, and brought into extreme danger of life, and when she appeared hourly about to expire, Mr Thimelby, overwhelmed with grief, earnestly implored that she might be removed outside the prison, but his request was refused." This was probably the Gabriel Thimelby mentioned by Challoner. Mr Richard Thimelby is still annually commemorated in the suffrages of the Newton Abbot community. Omitting what we shall hereafter find in our Chronicle I may here insert part of a letter from Prioress Thimelby written on the occasion of the clothing of her sister-in-law. "For our dearest sister, though her eyes' deluge be not yet wholly ceased, yet who can repine at so happy a flood, which has raised her to the contemplation of heaven, where such pearls as her tears contribute with other jewels to the riches of that ocean of delight! . . . But enough of this sad subject. Our dear sister hath now changed mourning into white attire. Oh! had you seen the solemnity, your heart would not have contained all joy, but shed some at your eyes; no less than heaven can dim the splendour of this glorious day. All things were so completely acted that my brother Ned and I were not a little goodly." This "brother Ned" was Edward, the Provost of Cambray.

A word on the after-history of Irnham. Mary, granddaughter of Sir John Thimelby, married Thomas Giffard of Chillington, and being without children settled the estate on her kinsman, Benedict Conquest of Houghton Conquest in Bedfordshire; Richard Conquest having married Elizabeth Thimelby, sister to the Prioress of Louvain, two generations earlier. Benedict Conquest of Irnham, who died in 1753, left an only daughter, Mary. At the death of her brother, also named Benedict, she became the heiress of Irnham and was married to Lord Arundell of Wardour. Two daughters were the issue of this marriage; Mary, wedded to her cousin, Lord Arundell, and Eleanor who became Lady Clifford of Chudleigh, and to whom Irnham belonged in 1817. In the Ugbrooke library is a handsomely bound eighteenth century prayer-book, in which are written the words, "Brought from Irnham." Through the two alliances last recorded it has come to pass that the descent of this ancient Catholic family is continued in the Barons of Ugbrooke.

Strange as it may seem that Shakespeare's Justice Shallow should be the ancestor of an illustrious Catholic family and of more than one of our Louvain nuns, the fact is certain. The youthful poet's poaching exploit in Charlecote Park, and his flight to London to escape prosecution, was not his only motive for holding up Sir Thomas Lucy as the addle-pated country justice, so given to boasting that Jack Falstaff found his "every third word a lie," to everlasting laughter. Shakespeare's sympathies were with the persecuted Catholic recusants of whom his father had been one. Half a century before his birth, Sisters Isabella and Joan Shakespeare were Prioress and Sub-Prioress of Wroxhall. He was also connected with the ancient Catholic family of the Ardens, whose seats were at Wilmcote and Park Hall, and Thomas Arden was Shakespeare's great-grandfather.

Now Sir Thomas Lucy was not only a fierce and bitter Protestant, but had acted a savage and merciless part in the judicial murder, if not martyrdom, of Edward Arden, one of the noblest victims of the Earl of Leicester's vindictive hatred of Catholics. During the proceedings in the Arden affair the Crown Commissioners held their sittings at Charlecote. Edward Arden, whose wife was a Throckmorton, and nearly related to the Prioress of Louvain, was executed in 1584. However, the Shakespearian portrait of Sir Thomas, whom the dramatist takes care we should identify by "the three luces in his coat" of arms, is but a caricature of the haughty and cruel but able knight, to whom the building of Charlecote is due. In this, the heart of Shakespeare's country, comparatively little is changed. The Lucys are still lords of the manor of Hampton Lucy; Charlecote and Clopton, the latter of which sent Sisters Barbara, Lidwine, and Catharine Clopton, to St Monica's, still stand as in days of old; the Warwickshire country-people still name the flowers of their fields by the old names of "love-in-idleness" and suchlike, as they did in Shakespeare's time. The Lucys of Charlecote, as far as I know, have never returned to the ancient faith and are still Protestants. But some of the family were Catholics a couple of centuries ago. In the annals of the Benedictine nuns of Ghent, now at Oulton, the sixth Abbess, who is commended as "vigorous and managing," and who died in 1703, appears as "Dame Magdalen Lucy, daughter of Edward Lucy, Esq., of Warwickshire, of an old Catholic family," and another Dame Magdalen Lucy was the tenth

Abbess of the Benedictines of Ghent. In the ages of faith the Lucys were distinguished as much for piety as for valour, and the foundation of the Trinitarian Monastery of Thelesford was owing to their pious munificence.

To Sir Edward Aston of Tixall Hall in Staffordshire, Sir Thomas Lucy, Shakespeare's enemy, gave in marriage his only daughter, Anne, who thus became the ancestress of the Astons and Cliffords of Tixall, and among whose descendants we number Sister Gertrude Thimelby (widow of Henry Thimelby of Irnham in Lincolnshire), daughter to the first Lord Aston ; her niece, Sister Catharine Aston, both professed at St Monica's, and not a few others who consecrated themselves to God in religion. Aston and Tixall are names that breathe cherished Catholic memories.* In Domesday Book, Earl Roger de Montgomery, who afterwards forsook the world for the cloister, and died a Benedictine monk at Shrewsbury, appears as Lord of Tixall. Tixall, however, was not the original seat of the Astons. In the reign of Henry III., we find Ralph de Aston, or Eston, seated at Great Haywood, which is a little over a mile from Colwich Priory. But when in the nineteenth century, Mass was to be said no more at Tixall Hall, the chapel was transferred, stone by stone, and rebuilt at Great Haywood, the old home of the family. A malthouse in the village, where, in 1806, a dinner was given to 700 people to honour the birth of Thomas Aston, son and heir to Sir William Clifford of Tixall, holds all that is left of the ancient mansion of the proud house of Aston.

Sir Edward Aston, in 1555, transferred his residence from Haywood to Tixall Hall, which he had built with the magnificence that may still be seen. It was his grandson, who died in 1598, that married Sir Thomas Lucy's daughter. Walter, their son, knighted at the coronation of James I., was in 1619 sent as ambassador to Spain for the affair of the expected Spanish marriage. Born and bred a Protestant, he embraced at Madrid the Catholic faith, from which his descendents have never swerved, and thus from the old Protestant knight, Sir Thomas Lucy, a long line of loyal Catholics is descended of whom Sir George Clifford, Bart., is the actual representative. Sir Walter's faith did not hinder his advancement ; in 1627 he was created Baron Aston of Forfar, and in 1635 was again ambassador to Spain. His wife, Gertrude Sadler, was the granddaughter of Sir Ralph Sadler, and his children married into the Catholic families of Persall, Thimelby, Fowler, and Weston. Under the Astons, Tixall was the refuge of hunted priests, and when James, fifth Lord Aston died, his daughter, Barbara, brought Tixall Hall to her husband, Thomas, the fourth son of Hugh, Lord Clifford of Chudleigh. The Honourable Mrs Barbara Clifford died in 1798, and to her son Arthur we are indebted for charming details of the life of our Sister Gertrude Thimelby, known as "Gatt" in the family circle. Of her numerous poetical writings I give the following as a sample. It is addressed to "Sir William and my lady Persall upon the death of their little Frank."

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* At Tixall Queen Mary of Scotland passed a few days of her captivity.

"Happy parents, mourn no more,
You this jewel but restore :
Nor yet question Heaven's will
Why he was not lent you still.
As you merited that grace
So his innocence the place
We all ambition ; nor could you
Covet yours, to bar his due.
Say, in him we know did meet
All was good and all was sweet,
Does this aggravate your Cross ?
Your gain is greater than your loss.
For alas ! what did he here ?
Please your eye, delight your ear ; . . .
Yet hence your comfort most will rise
God loves the child that quickly dies."

Some six of Sister Gertrude's letters were kept at Tixall when Arthur Clifford wrote his history.

Of her brother, the second Lord Aston, we have a lifelike picture in the letters of his grandson, Sir Edward Southcote, given in Father Morris's *Troubles*. During the turmoil of the Civil War the stalwart baron distinguished himself by his heroism in the royal cause, for which his only reward was in fines and persecution, till as he writes, he was "a hundred thousand pounds the worse" for his own and his father's loyalty. In his magnificent way of living, he certainly showed some eccentricity, and we wonder what Sister Gertrude thought of such details as these: "My Lord's table was daily served with twenty dishes at a course, three courses the year about; and I remember it was brought up by twenty of his men, who as they came up the great stairs and in the dining-room affected to stamp louder than they needed, which made a noise like a clap of thunder every course that was brought up. . . . At four o'clock he would retire to a covered seat he had in his vineyard, where, like King Assuerus, he would sit in solemn state where nobody durst approach him, and at five his chariot, with a pair of his six gray Flanders mares, made on purpose so narrow that nobody should have room to sit by him." On one occasion at Perry Hall "the doors being open he rode on horseback into the hall, and seeing lights up the stairs, which were broad and of easy ascent, he rode up the stairs too, and never alighted from his horse till he came close to the table where they were sitting at supper, who were much pleased with his frolic and glad to see him." So far Sir Edward, who describes him as "a corpulent, tall man, of six foot and two inches high."

His son, the third Lord Aston, was imprisoned in the Tower on occasion of Oates's Plot.

The history of the Cliffords of Tixall does not enter into my present scope. They were ever faithful to their religion and loyal to their King. Of Father Walter Clifford, S.J., born at Tixall, brother to the historian quoted above, his Superior wrote from Palermo where he died, that "if an angel could die, his death would be like Father Clifford's." At Tixall the royal exiles of France were welcomed with noble hospitality, and in this ancient home of the Catholic Faith the late Lady Georgiana Fullerton was born.

From our Louvain MSS. I take the following account of Sister Gertrude's clothing:—

"My Lord and Lady Aston gave her dowry. She had a clothing gown of cloth of silver which cost £40, and she gave £20 more to make it unto church stuff. She gave also another vestment and an antependium of cloth of gold and a petticoat of cloth of silver, which she gave her niece, Sister Catharine Aston"; of course to be worn at her clothing and then given to the Church. Lord Aston also figures as a noble benefactor to the Carthusians of Sheen Anglorum.

"Upon the 29th of June (1615) was professed Sister Winifred Blundell, daughter of William Blundell of Little Crosby in Lancashire, Esquire, a constant Catholic who hath suffered very much for his conscience." Cheerfully generous in patient suffering for the faith, for which they were rewarded by a crowd of religious vocations in the family, the Blundells of Little Crosby stand unsurpassed in the heroic annals of Catholic Lancashire for their unshaken loyalty to their religion. In Lancashire and at Crosby they have dwelt for eight centuries, but I am only now concerned with four generations of this heroic race, beginning with Richard, father of the William Blundell referred to by our chronicler in the Louvain records.

Richard Blundell of Crosby Hall, born in 1536, died a prisoner for the faith in Lancaster Castle on the 19th of March 1592, to which prison he had been committed for harbouring Robert Woodroffe, a seminary priest, who figures among the Wisbeach prisoners in a State Paper of uncertain date. This Robert Woodroffe, condemned to death, but reprieved, in 1591, belonged to the Woodroffes of Burnley, whose estate by marriages passed successively to the families of Townsley, Ingleby, Sherburne, and Hargreaves. (Another Robert Woodroffe, was ordained priest at Rome in 1606. His father was mayor of Barnstaple in Devon. A third Robert Woodroffe was ordained priest at Lisbon in 1679.)

Richard Blundell by his wife, Anne, daughter of Richard Starkie of Stretton in Cheshire, had several children, and William, the eldest, born in 1560, was shortly after his return from his studies at Douay committed to prison with his father on the same charge. There he remained for five years, but his sufferings for his religion only ended with his life. Our chronicler gives a brief account of the incident of the cemetery called the Harkirke, wherein twenty-six priests and many laymen were buried. This affair cost him another imprisonment and a fine of £2300. In the Rev. T. E. Gibson's *Crosby Records* is a little poem of this William Blundell, whereof every stanza ends with this refrain :

> "Sweet Jesu with thy mother mylde,
> Sweet Virgine mother with thy chylde,
> Angells and Saints of each degree,
> Redresse our contree's miserie."

His wife, Emilia Norris of Speke, also underwent a long imprisonment in Chester Castle. She died in 1631, her husband surviving her till 1638. It appears from a document given in Gillow's delightful *Haydock Papers* that Mrs Hoghton, widow of Thomas Hoghton of Lea Hall, who was slain in a feud in 1589, was in October 1592 denounced to the Government because "since the death of her husband she hath kept one Richard Blundell, brother to William Blundell of Crosby, *armiger*, who is an obstinate Papist, well acquainted with a number of seminaries, and he teacheth her children to sing and play upon the virginals." This Richard was a priest, Mrs Hoghton's chaplain.

Two of William Blundell's children claim our special attention. His daughter, Margaret, was our Sister Winifred. His eldest son, Nicholas, is said by *his* son, Br. Richard Blundell, S.J., to have been "born, or at least suckled, in prison where his parents for a long time lay on account of their faith," and year after year the name of Nicholas Blundell appears in the recusant lists. He had thirteen children by his wife, Anne Bradshaw of Haigh Hall in Lancashire. Space forbids me to dwell on the Bradshaws of the Haigh, concerning whom copious accounts may be read in the first volume of Foley's *Records*, and in the *Haydock Papers*. The eleventh of the thirteen was the saintly Br. Richard Blundell, S.J., a memoir of whom is given by Foley. His eldest brother was "the Cavalier," William Blundell, a glorious confessor of the faith and in some respects the most interesting scion of the Blundell family, in whom the manly endurance and unconquerable gaiety of the race under the heaviest trials appear in their brightest lustre. A charming sketch of his life, published by the Rev. T. E. Gibson in the *Month* (1878-79) is taken from the Cavalier's own writings. One or two quotations from these will illustrate the Cavalier's character and his career.

At the age of twenty-two we find him with the royal forces under Lord Strange at Preston. On 18th March 1642, at the siege of Lancaster, a cannon-ball broke his thigh and he was crippled for life. "I remember," he writes in 1651 to his sister-in-law, Margaret Haggerston, "there was a young fellow not far from Haggerston, that told a friend of ours that would gladly have drawn him to the wars, that 'it was a pity so gude a like fellow as he should be knocked o' the head.' You remember what a pretty, straight young thing, all dashing in scarlet, I came to Haggerston, when you saw me last. But now, if you chance to hear a thing come thump-thump up the stairs, (like a knocker, God bless us, at midnight), look out confidently, and if you find it to have one heel and no other, a gross full body, with an old peruke clapt on a bald pate, do not fear, for all that the thing is no goblin, but the very party we talk of."

A second quotation from the Cavalier is all I can find room for. "The war between Charles the First and his Parliament began A.D. 1642. That year, 18th March, my thigh was broken with a shot, in the King's service. A.D. 1643, all my goods and most of my lands were sequestered for being a Papist and delinquent, as the prevailing party called the King's partakers. In the year 1645 my wife farmed my demesne at Crosby; and all her quick goods being lost, she bought one horse and two oxen to make up a team. A.D. 1646, 13th November, I valued all my goods, and comparing them with my debts I found myself worse than nothing by the whole sum of £81, 18s., my lands being all lost. A.D. 1653. Till this year I remained under sequestration, having one-fifth part allowed to my wife, and farming only from the sequestrators my demesne of Crosby and the Mill. About midsummer 1653, my whole estate was purchased and compounded for with my own money for my use, so that in the month of February 1653, I was indebted £1100, 7s."

The brave old Cavalier was a welcome guest at Haggerston and Scarisbrick in the years of his penury. His wife and his maiden sister, Frances, both heroic women, upheld his never-failing courage throughout his life-long trials. Two other sisters, Margaret and Anne, were nuns abroad, the latter dying Abbess of the Poor Clares at Dunkirk. Of his own children, Nicholas and Thomas were Jesuit Fathers; five of his seven daughters embraced the religious state, three at Rouen and two at Gravelines. Of his grandchildren, one was a Jesuit, three were Poor Clares at Gravelines, and two Benedictine nuns at Ghent where their mother also died. This saintly lady was the daughter of Roland Eyre of Hassop, and the Cavalier used to count sixty-seven of his relatives, outside his own family, who had consecrated themselves to God in religion. His fifth imprisonment was in 1689, at Manchester, where he found himself in company with Mr Townley of Townley, with whom, he writes, life would be pleasant everywhere. In 1694, his son, William, was imprisoned for the sham Lancashire Plot, and four years later, 24th May 1698, this stalwart old Cavalier and saintly confessor of the faith died at Crosby Hall, and was buried in the Blundell Chapel of Sefton Church. His grandson was the last male representative of the ancient line, whose daughter married Henry Peppard of Drogheda, and their son Nicholas, who married Clementina Tempest, took the name of Blundell. Their posterity to the present generation have continued the ancestral Catholic traditions.

The Feast of St Anthony of Padua, 12th June 1616, was at St Monica's the profession day of a chosen child of grace, Sister Mary Windsor, then in her twenty-fourth year. Her singularly beautiful death, forty years later, will be told by our chronicler in its proper place. "A very orderly and fervourous religious all her time," is the simple eulogy of her holy life in one of our old MSS. As her relative, Sister Margaret Windsor, was Prioress of Syon at the dissolution, a brief sketch of the family history will not be out of place.

Between Hitchenden and Slough, in the county of Buckingham, the ancient manor of Bradenham had changed hands more than once in the fifteenth century, having been sold by Sir John Wiltshire, in 1426, to John Botiler, a London clothier, and purchased after his death by one John Scott, till, in 1500, it became the property of Sir Andrew Windsor, Knt. Bold, active, a courtier by nature, burdened with few scruples when the royal will was concerned, Sir Andrew was well fitted to rise at the Court of Henry VIII. His bravery at the siege at Teronenne, won for him the royal notice, in Tudor days the only road to promotion. Henry made him Keeper of the Wardrobe, and in 1529 he was summoned to Parliament as Baron Windsor of Bradenham, and won the hand of Elizabeth Blount, daughter of William, Lord Mountjoy. So high did he stand with the King, that it was deemed a daring act in Wolsey to threaten Lord Windsor with the Star Chamber on account of his turbulent retainers, and he maintained himself in the royal favour till his death in 1543. Further on I have to mention his brother, Sir Anthony. His sister, Margaret, was Prioress of Syon under Abbess Browne in 1518, and still held that office under Abbess Jordan at the dissolution in 1539. This Abbess was sister to Dame Isabella Jordan, O.S.B., of Wilton. At the death of Abbess Willoughby, Wolsey procured the election of Dame Jordan against the wishes of the King and of Anne Boleyn, who desired the promotion of Dame Elinor Cary, whose brother, William, had married Anne's sister, Mary Boleyn. Wolsey's reasons were good, but the transaction was the first stroke that led to the Cardinal's fall. After the dissolution, Lord Windsor added to his estates much of the Syon property in Gloucestershire and Wilts, and laid the foundations of a wealthy house, represented later on, after it had lost the faith, by the Earls of Plymouth. I may here insert in modern spelling an extract from Bedyll's letter to Cromwell, anent the surrender of Syon Abbey and the Windsors.

"On Wednesday my Lord Windsor came hither, sent for by Master Leighton and me, and laboured much that day for the converting of his sister (Margaret Windsor), and some other of his kinswomen here; and yesterday we had my Lord of London here in the chapter-house of women, and the confessor also, which both take it upon their consciences and the peril of their souls, that the ladies ought by God's law to consent to the King's title, wherewith they were much comforted, and when we willed all such as consented to the King's title to sit still, and all such as would not consent thereunto to depart out of the chapter-house, there was found none among them which departed." Bedyll was thoroughly fooled; sooner than "consent to the King's title," the nuns left England in a body, and to their firmness we owe our only pre-reformation community now in England. He seems to have suspected something, for he continues, "Albeit I was informed this night that one Agnes Smythe, a sturdy dame and a wilful, hath laboured divers of her sisters to stop, that we should not have their convent seal, but we trust we shall have it this morning with the subscription of the Abbess *for herself and all her sisters, which is the best fashion that we can bring it to.*" A few old and infirm nuns went to their families, among them, perhaps, Margaret Windsor. Abbess Jordan was buried in Denham Church, Buckinghamshire, with the following inscription on her monumental brass: "Of your charity pray for the soule of Dame Agnes Jordan, sometime Abbess of the monasterye of Syon, which departed this lyfe the 29 of Januarye, in the year of Our Lord 15 . . . on whose soule Jesu have mercy. Amen." Lord Windsor died in 1543, and in his will he leaves his sister, Margaret, an annuity of £80, 6s. 8d. to pray for his soul and the souls of their parents, his sister surviving him (how long is not known), remained faithful to the end to her vows. Lord Windsor in his will and elsewhere calls himself Andrews, Lord Windsor, on account of his mother, whose family name was Andrews. The directions of the will were that he should be buried "in the choir of the Church of the Holy Trinity at Hounslow . . . between the pillars, where his entire well-beloved wife, Elizabeth, Lady Windsor, lieth buried." It is pleasing to add that his wife's father, William, Lord Mountjoy, gave an asylum to the saintly Richard Whitford, monk of Syon, best known to us as the author of the *Jesus Psalter.* The will aforesaid also gives direction for a monument in Hounslow to his son, George, already dead, and in Weever's time part of the mutilated Latin inscription was legible, and ran thus, translated: "Pray for the souls of George Windsor, son of Sir Andrew Windsor of Stanwell, and of Ursula his wife . . . and of his heir-apparent, John, Earl of Oxford." George Windsor's wife was Ursula Vere, sister of John, fourteenth Earl of Oxford. They had no children, but Ursula married afterwards Sir Edmund Knightly of Fawsley.

The first Baron of Bradenham had begun his public career under evil auspices, his summons to the Parliament of 1529 coinciding with the beginnings of war declared against the See of Peter, but during fifty years after his death his descendants were not of those who favoured the new learning. His son and heir, William, who died in 1558, was in trouble about his chaplain in the reign of Edward VI. By his first wife, Margaret, daughter of William Sambourne of Southcote in Berkshire, he had seven sons and nine daughters. His sister Elizabeth, by her marriage with Sir Peter Vavasour of Spaldington, became the mother of Thomas Vavasour, M.D. Both Dr Vavasour and his heroic wife died martyrs to the Faith of Christ, overcome by the horrors of their fetid prisons, the former in the Castle of Hull on 12th May 1585, the latter in the Kidcote at York in 1587. But of the Vavasours and their connection with our community, I shall write at length elsewhere. A second Sister Margaret Windsor of Syon, died at Lisbon in 1643, a century after the Prioress.

William, Lord Windsor, was among the first to draw the sword for the rights of Queen Mary Tudor. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Edward (our Sister Mary's grandfather), who had, in 1557, distinguished himself among the 7000 Englishmen serving under the Earl of Pembroke at the storming of St Quintin's. In Elizabeth's reign he probably did not make his religion very prominent, for he retained her favour and entertained her at his house, though I find him "making merry" with Frances Yaxley, Sir Thomas Cornwallis, and other Catholics, and he brought up his children in the faith. He died at the Spa in 1574. His son, Frederic, fourth Lord Windsor, dying without issue, was succeeded by his brother, Henry. Holding aloof from the Court in the retirement of a country life, we find him sheltering persecuted priests at Bradenham, so that, in 1593, Topcliffe writes to Burghley that "he can deeply touch him and other Papists," from the confession of Gilbert Laughton, prisoner in the Tower, "come over from Father Parsons and Cardinal Allen." The Powder Plot brought him cruel vexation, on the charge that the conspirators had taken armour from his house, and a third of the value of his estate was claimed for the King. In 1608, he obtained a licence to leave England. His brother, Andrew, Sister Mary Windsor's father, was also a staunch and devoted Catholic.

With his son, Thomas, sixth Lord Windsor, the direct male line ends, and, I fear, the succession of Catholic Barons of Bradenham terminates, for although in 1660, the title was restored to his nephew, I find no Lord Windsor to emulate the firmness of Norfolk, Shrewsbury, Arundell, Clifford, and their compeers, who by the iniquitous Act of 1678 lost their seats in the House of Lords. This Thomas, Lord Windsor, is mentioned in Panzani's *Relation to the Holy See*, in 1637, as one of the Catholic peers who had signed a petition against Bishop Smith's government of the Catholics of England, but had afterwards repented having done so. At the time of the projected Spanish marriage we find him in high favour at Court and Rear-Admiral in the navy, but in 1625 he had to undergo hard times, and was compelled to surrender all the arms found in his house at Bradenham to the Bishop of Worcester, appointed by the Council to receive them. He married Catherine, daughter of Edward Somerset, Earl of Worcester, and died childless in 1642.

A singularly interesting letter in Dr Oliver's *Collections* on the state of Catholics in those evil days, written by Anthony Windsor, son of Sir Edward Windsor, Knt., and great-grandson of Sir Anthony Windsor mentioned above, brother to the first Baron of Bradenham, deserves our attention here. This Anthony, who died in 1697 and was a devout Catholic, wrote the letter in his seventy-fifth year, as he tell us. Referring to Sir William Pershall to whom I have alluded elsewhere as connected with the Astons and Thimelbys, he says, that the said Sir William, "a gentleman of my acquaintance who had been contemporary and fellow-dweller with the great Bradshaw (the regicide) at Gray's Inn, and had contracted a great friendship with him, found himself obliged to apply to him for assistance (during Oliver's usurpation). . . . I have heard Sir William affirm to the gentlemen, his friends, at the club or meeting held at the Hen and Chicken Court, near St Dunstan's Church in Fleet Street, where Sir William constantly resorted, that he had experienced (Bradshaw's) favours to himself and others." Anthony Windsor adds that on one occasion Sir William calling on Bradshaw, the latter told him he was studying politics, to wit, a paper of Cecil's, "and pray you, see how you Papists are to be dealt with." The sum of the paper was that the penal laws must never be taken off: but that "when Papists begin to be too popular and agreeable to their neighbours, and even to be thought to deserve the privileges and freedom of other subjects . . . then to obviate and allay this good opinion, the ministry must be sure to fix some *odious design* upon them, which could never fail to be believed by the generality of the common people, and then they might put the penal laws into execution, to what degree they should think necessary against them." Prince Rupert is named by Anthony Windsor, as one of those who harassed Charles I. to recall his proclamation of indulgence and toleration in matters of religion, out of hatred to Catholics.

With the Fortescue family we shall deal later on, uniting with their story that of the Winters of Haddington.

It may surprise some to read in the account given below by the chronicler of the Rev. John Bolt, that after his conversion Queen Elizabeth desired he should resume his post in the Chapel Royal without sacrificing his religion. The same is said of the two eminent Catholic composers, Tallis and Byrd, who actually retained their offices in Elizabeth's Chapel, according to Mr Terry in his paper read at the Newcastle Catholic Conference of 1901. Bolt's course of action was in accordance with Catholic principle; Tallis and Byrd may have acted in good faith, though their proceeding cannot be approved.

With Sister Helen Brittan, or Breton, we are introduced to a group of Catholics, of whom the most illustrious was that most heroic confessor of the faith, Br. Thomas Pounde, S.J., who underwent thirty years' imprisonment for his conscience. The chronicler is probably wrong in saying that Sister Helen's mother was a niece of Thomas Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. In his will the Earl leaves bequests to "my sister Pounde" and "my sister Bretten." It would thus seem that Mrs Brittan, like Mrs Pounde, was a sister of the Earl, so that Sister Helen and the glorious confessor of Christ were first cousins. The Rev. William Brittain, priest at Lisbon College, 1633, was probably Sister Helen's nephew. It was only about 1420 that the Breton family passed to Monckton-Farley in Wiltshire from their home at Layer Breton near Colchester. They had been great benefactors to St John's Abbey of Colchester. Agnes Wriothesley, nun of Syon, was aunt to the Earl of Southampton, and one of his descendants was Sister Mary Philpott of St Monica's. The lady Katharine Cornwallis mentioned in the text is still prayed for among the benefactresses of our community. She was a sister of Henry, the second Earl, who was imprisoned in the Tower for his partizanship of Mary Queen of Scots. Lady Katharine's husband, Thomas Cornwallis, was probably the Sir Thomas Cornwallis of Brome in Suffolk, whose religious career was interesting. High in favour with Queen Mary, he seems to have outwardly conformed after Elizabeth's accession, but soon fell under suspicion of Catholic sympathies, was compelled to listen to a dispute on religion between Dr Harpsfield, prisoner for the faith, and one Mr Provost, and weakly made his submission to the Queen, "asking pardon for having withstood her laws in establishing true religion." This was in 1567, and in 1577 he is mentioned in a state paper with a Jesuit and other Papists, as one of them. Father Yelverton, S.J., in an autobiographical account given by Foley from the archives of the English College, Rome, states that (probably about 1598) "Sir Thomas Cornwallis, Knight, of Brome, Suffolk, sent for me and invited me to stay with him, and there for three or four months I repeated the breviary with him." In 1598 he wrote in a touching letter to Burghley, that his sole happiness was "with a quiet conscience to end the rest of my days in mine own house."

(Foley's *Records, S.J.*; Morris's *Troubles*; *Louvain MSS.*; Clifford's *History of Tixall*; Camden's *Britannia*; Dugdale's *Warwickshire*; Whitaker's *History of Craven*; Edmondson's *Baronagiums*; Rose Kingsley's *Shakespeare's Country, etc.*)

CHAPTER IV

FROM THE ARRIVAL AT ST MONICA'S OF THE REV. JOHN BOLT TO THE DEATH OF SISTER ELIZABETH DUMFORD, 1613-1618.

1613. IN the year 1613 upon Midsummer Day was professed Martha Holman, lay-sister, daughter of William Holman, dwelling at Winchester in Hampshire. In this said year was professed Sister Magdalen Throckmorton at the age of twenty-two years, and to her profession came a reverend priest, Mr John Bolt (*alias* Johnson), who having known her in the world, was very glad to see her so happily made a nun. This good priest, being a good musician, was content to stay and remain with us ever after, and did here set up all our music to the honour of God, teaching our sisters to sing and play on the organ. And to say somewhat of him: He was one who truly contemned the world and desired to live poor all his life, for he had refused those performents which he might have had in England, living two or three years in the Court of Queen Elizabeth, being in great request for his voice and skill in music; but the Court was most tedious unto him, being drawn by God to better things. For he had a great desire to become a Catholic, and therefore once seeing a fit time and occasion, he stole away from the Court and came to live among Catholics, where after some time he was reconciled, to his great joy; and although he had many allurements to seek after places of preferment, he would not accept of them, but desired much to come over the seas, which as yet he could not compass in some years.

Church of the Holy Ghost, St Augustine's Priory, Newton Abbot, S. Devon.

[*Face page* 150.

The Queen hearing of his departure, fell out with the master of music, and would have flung her pantofle at his head, for looking no better unto him, but he lived secretly in Catholic gentlemen's houses, being very welcome everywhere for his good parts, and at length fell into great trouble, at the time that Topcliffe persecuted Catholics, who apprehended him for a priest. But the wicked fellow was mistaken; notwithstanding he made him to be kept prisoner, and caused also irons to be put on him. He confessed that he was a Catholic, which alone was felony for having been reconciled, but he cared not, told simply the truth, and our Lord took care of him, and made his brother who now is a knight, to take his defence in hand, insomuch that when the cruel Topcliffe sought to bring him to torments that he might compel him to confess what he knew of priests and Catholics, then did his friends so work for him, that the Lady Rich wrote in his behalf a letter, having known him at the Court. So that at length after much ado he got free out of danger, when he sought means to come over. Although it was even then offered him to live in the Court at his pleasure without any molestation for his conscience, but he liked better to live in the Court of Christ, and therefore coming to St Omer's studied there in the College, and afterwards was made priest, and coming here to the profession as is said, we requested him to stay with us, which he was content to do, we taking him to keep as one of our Sisters, without any pay, maintaining our music to the honour and glory of God.

In the year 1614 was professed, upon the 17th of August, Sister Helen Brittan, daughter to George Brittan of Mountfarden * in Wiltshire, an Esquire of ancient noble family, who married a niece of the Earl of Southampton and suffered many troubles for his conscience, insomuch that having a priest taken in his house, he was condemned to death, but escaped by means of good friends, and

* Monckton Farley.

remained confined to his house having made away his estate unto his eldest son, Sir Harry Brittan. The rest of the children were left to the Lady Catharine Cornwallis, their cousin, to take care of them, their mother being dead, and himself living a holy retired life, saying daily the Roman Breviary, and giving himself to prayer and good works. This his daughter, Helen Brittan, not liking to live according to the said lady's appointment, got her goodwill that she might come over seas to her cousin, Mrs Fortescue, who lived at St Omer's. This way did Almighty God take to draw her to Himself, for as yet she had no intention to religion, but only to see these countries and learn French, but that Supreme Goodness who loved her and had chosen her for His spouse, turned this vain intention of hers to a better aim, for she got by little and little a desire to undertake some religious course, and tried for a while the life of the Poor Clares, living some weeks as a scholar without; but her health would not serve for so hard an Order, whereupon returning from Graveling (Gravelines) to St Omer's, her cousin Fortescue, being much affected to our monastery, wished her to seek a place here, and also wrote in her behalf to our Reverend Mother, so that coming hither she was admitted, having also sufficient good means of her own, and passed here very well, without any want of health, and now made her profession upon St Lawrence's Octave at the age of twenty years.

The same year upon St John Evangelist's day in Christmas, died our Rev. Father John Fenn, having been long time decrepit and blind through old age. He lived a true sincere man, one of the old stamp, and served God faithfully. Our Lord rewarded him with an easy death, and took him out of this life upon his patron St John's day. He was also a skilful musician in song but not in instruments, and did teach our sisters both at St Ursula's and here before Mr Johnson came. He left to us at his death in a manner all that he had, whereby the foresaid things of his which were used in our church were now ours, and divers good things besides, as a fair golden cross, also a library of books, which are still retained in the Father's house, as a good help to our ghostly fathers. This worthy father is buried in our cloister.

1615. Upon the 29th of June was professed Sister Winifred Blundell, daughter of William Blundell of Little Crosby in Lancashire, Esquire, and a constant Catholic, who had suffered very much for his conscience, and his father died in prison for having a priest taken in his house, and deceasing there, as is said, they proceeded in the rigour of justice against his son; but he, at the cost of his purse, made a shift to escape their hands for that time, yet suffered many troubles and molestations afterwards, so that he was forced to lie all night abroad when pursuivants beset his house, which was once for fourteen days together, upon the report of a wicked priest that fell and became a minister, discovering what he knew of Catholics.

Another great trouble befell them upon this occasion. There died in the parish a woman, and because she was a Catholic they would not bury her in the church (churchyard) but in a great common, so nigh the highway that the horses travelling along did almost dig the dead corpse up again, which being told to Mr Blundell, he for charity sake enclosed a piece of ground of his own with walls, for he had stone enough, and after this all the poor Catholics that died thereabouts were buried there. Some did put stones upon their graves with crosses after the Catholic manner, yet this was done without the owner's consent, with leave only of his wife. But at length when about eighty had been buried there, comes the High Sheriff with thirty men and pulled down the walls, knocking the stones to pieces, both those of the walls and those that lay upon the graves, and carried away the crosses in mocking manner, also digged some part of the graves, and sounded their trumpet coming away in great pomp; and for permitting this place of burial was Mr Blundell fined to pay £1000, and being condemned in premunire was made to pay £1000 more.

Thus doth Almighty God permit His faithful servants awhile in this life to suffer for Him, that they may rejoice and triumph the more for ever in heavenly glory. For both this gentleman and his wife were good and virtuous persons, bringing up their children in the fear of God, and the mother would often essay her daughters, if they would be religious. One of them was willing, and after some years of delay upon occasions that happened, at length Mr Worthington, being then in England, at his return hither took with him this daughter of theirs to be religious in our monastery, so she entered together with his daughter Ann. She changed her name from Margaret to Winifred at her profession, at the age of twenty-three years.

The same year, 1615, was professed Sister Ann Worthington, daughter of our often-mentioned friend, Mr Worthington, of whom it shall not be amiss to say something in this place, for his father died in prison a constant Catholic, and himself being then a youth and the eldest son, was not only imprisoned but also whipped for to make him confess something about priests, yet they prevailed not by this means. For indeed his house was a receptacle for priests and religious men ; wherefore after many losses this good Mr Worthington lived here in these parts upon a pension of the King of Spain, he being nephew to Dr Worthington of happy memory, who was many years President of the College at Douay, and this young gentleman having, as is said, married Mr Allen's daughter, her first child, named Anna Johanna at her christening, Mrs Allen her grandmother would needs take to keep as her own, and that she might give her unto God she put her to be brought up first at St Ursula's and afterwards here at St Monica's, when the English nuns removed. So that this his daughter, Ann, had her education in these two monasteries all the time that Mrs Allen lived, except sometimes coming home for a little while ; but after her grandmother's death her father took her out of our cloister, being about eleven years of age, that she might see the world before she made her choice; and having at this time occasion of going into England, took with him his daughter, his wife, and other children, except the eldest son, who remained in the English College at Douay. And at his return to these parts, she being now about the age of fourteen, was content to enter again into religion, although the vanities of the world had much allured her at that youthful age. For, finding liberty in place of her holy vocation, if the grace of God had not prevailed in her, she would easily have yielded to follow it, but our Lord Who from her very cradle had chosen her for Himself, did not leave to send His holy inspiration into her soul, and also afflicted her with sickness in the world, in such wise that whatever difficulty she felt in nature heroically by the help of divine grace she overcame, and entered again to her former habitation of our cloister soon after her coming out of England, and was now professed at the age of sixteen years.

This year (1615) also, a widow made her profession as a converse or white sister, named Elizabeth Clifford, daughter to John Thimelby of Irnham in Lincolnshire, Esquire of ancient house, who became a Catholic when this his daughter was about fourteen years of age. After he embraced the Catholic religion he was so constant therein that for more than fifty years, being almost a hundred at his death, he suffered persecution. He was not permitted to pay the statute, but always two parts of his estate. Once he was prisoner in Lincoln Castle and his sons taken from him and put to divers lords to keep, but God's grace so prevailed that none of them could be induced to heresy. This his daughter was brought up with her grandmother, by reason that her mother died when she was but three years old, and her said grandmother, being a Protestant, brought her up morally and married her according to her degree; but she liking better of her father's religion, gave herself to the reading of Scripture that she might the better confute the adverse part. For finding the heretics in fault both in good life and in their opinions. she would dispute with the parsons and speak so well in the defence of Catholics as if she had been one herself. Being as is said married at the age of twenty to Henry Clifford of Brackenbury in the same Lincolnshire, Esquire, and of near kindred to the Earl of Cumberland, she had by this marriage nine children ; five died young, but all christened. Her husband being a Protestant, she remained so likewise, although well-minded, until that at length she had a scruple to live so long against her conscience, and so got by her father's help to be reconciled, with her husband's liking ; for he rather was Catholic-minded than anything else. But after this he was enticed to go with the Earl of Cumberland into Spain, and being desirous to have experience in such matters went with him as one of the chief men in the fleet, but had such ill luck in the voyage that he died there. Whereupon, this his widow, like a good mother, took care of her children to bring them up Catholics, and in respect that the eldest son and two daughters were provided of temporal means, and her youngest son was taken of a very rich man in that shire, who having no children, intended to make him his heir ; his mother seeing he was there bred up in heresy, resolved to take him thence, and rather for his sake to come herself over seas with him that he might come to learning by Catholic teaching. This, her good intention, Almighty God rewarded with greater benefits also to herself, for having placed her son in the College of St Omer's, and living in the town a retired life, she once would needs come on a pilgrimage to Our Lady's of Sichem, when it happened that at her return thence into the town, being then Holy Week, she was unwilling to travel in that good time, but desired one of the Fathers in the College of St John's to help her to some place that she might not lie in an inn. He then got her to be lodged and boarded here in our Father's house for one fortnight. In which time hearing our bell at midnight to call up the nuns to Matins, she got a desire to come amongst us, and asked if she might not be admitted for a white sister, offering also good means. Our Reverend Mother did not deny, nor yet fully grant her request, but told her she must wait till she would send her further word. So back she goeth to St Omer's, but being there our Lord permitted an occasion to drive her hither again with haste, for she was so troubled with a suitor (who being a gentleman of good fashion would fain have had her in marriage), that for to avoid his importunate molestation she came hither again and spake so earnestly that she was admitted into our monastery and might have been a nun but that she was loth to bind herself to the great Office, being so much in years, although healthy, so she was professed at the age of fifty, and having been a widow some sixteen or seventeen years made now a most happy second marriage, being raised by God Himself to the dignity of becoming His spouse, far above her expectation.

This year also (1615) was professed Sister Mary Best, daughter unto a Catholic gentleman of Yorkshire, who also had a sister that soon followed her here, of whom we shall speak more hereafter. This nun was one of those that went to Bruges cloister afterwards, wherefore we omit to speak more of her, referring it to their own Chronicle.

In the year 1616 were professed two nuns, the one named Sister Mary Windsor, daughter of Mr Andrew Windsor, son of the late Lord Windsor and of the Lady Catharine Vere, daughter to the Earl of Oxford. He was a younger brother, but always a constant Catholic; among all his children God chose this for His own, even from her tender years, alluring her to Him by this means. Being but nine years of age, a priest upon a certain occasion asked her, as it were in jest, whether she would be a religious. She having before heard of nuns answered, Yea, but he replied again: "But when you come to more years you will be of another mind." She answered more earnestly than before, that by her faith and truth she would not be of other mind. Now although this promise was of no value, being but a child, nevertheless Almighty God used the same as a bait to catch her by, for afterwards she had a scruple that she must keep this promise of hers. She was also much given to show charity even from that young age, especially towards the sick; having of her mother learned some skill in surgery, she would still be ready to help those that had sores or wounds. If any servants of the house were sick, she would many times secretly get good and dainty meat for to bring them, and if they were not able to feed themselves would put the meat into their mouths and assist them what she could. Afterwards coming to years, she was by her friends much urged to marry and also had many occasions presented, but ever was in trouble of mind when they were like to happen, and our Lord also concurred to make the intended matches crossed by some means or other. But that which also greatly afflicted her, and made her weary of the world, was to see that oftentimes men were like to kill one another about her, for if she showed favour unto one, as esteeming some virtue that was in him, another was mad with jealousy thereat. So that at length after much ado she got her father's consent to come over to be a religious, although he had long denied her.

Upon an occasion that happened, whereby he began to fear she might in time chance to marry against his mind, for there was then one very earnest in the pursuit of her whom he could by no means like of (he gave her leave to enter religion). She thereupon set up a Father of the Society of Jesus to strike the iron whilst it was hot to procure his grant, which having obtained, she willingly bade the world farewell, wherein she could find no true content, and so seeking an opportunity to get over, she came and lived a while in London, and boarded at Mrs Cook's where she met with one Mistress Mary Altham, a young gentlewoman, who was designed for our monastery by Mr Cooper, a worthy priest, then prisoner in Newgate, and her place here granted. With her then she came over seas, but as yet unresolved to what place to take herself; the English Jesuitesses and Mrs Mary Ward would very gladly have got her into their company, but she liked not their manner of life. Then coming to the Benedictines at Brussels she might easily have entered, for the foresaid Father Francis Yates, who gained her father's grant, had his sister, then Prioress there, and had well recommended this his child unto them. Notwithstanding, she would not beg the place, in respect that she desired first to see her fellow-companion enter in here, thinking that herself might afterwards return to Brussels. But that Supreme Providence who had chosen her for this place, ordained they should both come to the town upon the eve of St Augustine, and did suddenly put an inspiration into her mind to like of this place, only upon understanding that we went in white, and hearing her companion say, "O how I long to be among those angels!" When, therefore, they were both together at the grate, she felt herself vehemently moved to kneel down and beg the place with the other. She did so, and was admitted together with her. So they were clothed and professed upon the 12th of June, this (one) being of the age of twenty-three. Of Sister Mary Altham, we refer to the other house's Chronicle, for she was of those that were sent to Bruges to begin the monastery.

1616, upon the 29th of December was professed Elizabeth Burrows, lay-sister, This woman had suffered many troubles for her conscience, and her desire was still either to become a religious or else to be made a martyr; which first thing Almighty God granted her, being in years.

In the year 1617, upon the 18th of June, was professed Mary Winter, white sister or converse, daughter unto Robert Winter of Hoodington (Huddington), in Warwickshire (Worcestershire), Esquire, and her mother, named Gertrude, was the daughter of Mr Talbot Graftot (of Grafton) who, if he had lived had been Earl of Shrewsbury.

This their daughter being put to nurse with a very choleric woman, one time in her anger she took the child in fury and flung it out of her arms, whereupon some of the infant's bones were broken, or so put out of joint that for all the bone-setters could do for her, and all the pains endured therein, she remained crooked all her life, which perhaps was the cause of her coming to religion; for her sisters, although they seemed to have a mind, yet the world and friends could not so easily part. But she at fit years was permitted by her brother to come to religion, although he loved her most dearly, and did give her portion. For her father, being drawn into the Gunpowder Plot treason, was executed for it. So she came to our monastery and was admitted for a white sister, because by the weakness of her limbs and crookedness she was not able to perform the duties of a black-veiled nun, and was now professed about the age of eighteen.

The same year, 1617, upon St Mary Magdalen's day, was professed another white sister, Mary Fortescue, her father of no great estate but of ancient family. Their house was a receptacle for all priests and religious men without partiality or exception. At length being now aged, they desired to come and end their days this side the seas, where they might enjoy the free exercise of Catholic religion, without continual fear and molestation as before. Their two daughters being also well bestowed in marriage with good Catholics, this their youngest daughter, Mary, they would have to come over with them, who being very crooked was not so fit for the world. But she, although unfit in body, had not yet unfitted her mind from the vanities of the world; therefore was unwilling to come with them, desiring rather to live with her sisters in pleasures and the delights of following her own will. Yet notwithstanding to obey her parents she condescended, but for one year or thereabouts living at St Omer's, she continued still in her vain mind, until that once upon the first Sunday in Advent being at a sermon in the chapel of the English Jesuits, where the preacher discoursed upon the Gospel of the General Judgment read in the church on that day, she became so moved and Almighty God so touched her heart that from thenceforward she wholly changed her former life, as also her gay apparel, going after that decently attired in black, and giving herself very earnestly to spiritual exercises. She had a great devotion to St Mary Magdalen, taking her for her patroness, and also desired much to enter among the English Jesuitesses, which then lived at St Omer's, but her parents being nothing affected to that kind of life would not permit her. So she lived about some three years a good, virtuous recollected life with her parents, until at length, desiring to become (a) religious, but fearing her weakness of body by reason of her crookedness, she understood that we took here some for white sisters, who were not bound to rise to Matins as the nuns, nor to the great Office, yet made the essential vows of religion and enclosure as well as they. Wherefore her parents, who much affected our monastery, procured her place here, and we liked her by reason, that having a fervent spirit it helped her, so that her former weakness hindered not from the exercises of religious life, and made her profession upon the day of her beloved patroness, St Mary Magdalen, the age of twenty-six.

The same year, 1617, upon the 12th of September, was professed Sister Catharine Jeames (James), daughter unto Sir Harry James, a knight of a good estate, who married a gentlewoman that was of very puritan kindred and brought up so likewise. He notwithstanding after her marriage prevailed so with her, that by the concurrence of God she became a very good Catholic, and so they lived many years, until at length he grew somewhat crazed in his wits, as it was thought, and went to church, as also would have had his wife do the like. But she, who had followed him in good, would not also follow him in evil, remaining still so constant a Catholic, that at length, not being able to endure his mad proceedings towards her, she got away from him, and, as the proverb is, came from God's blessing into a warm sun, for her sister, the Lady Cary, unto whom she made her refuge with her other friends, although they willingly received and shrouded her from her husband, yet they did so molest her with bringing ministers to persuade her to alter her mind and become a heretic, that she endured for some time great vexation among them, until at length seeing this worthy lady to remain so constant and immovable in her religion, they left off to molest her any more, and kindly assisted her with temporal means. Another great trouble she had about her children; but they were all so godly and well disposed that their father could not make go to church and do as he did, although he kept them from their mother. The younger sort of them, three daughters, among whom was this his daughter Catharine, were put to a woman in London to learn, paying but a very small matter for their board. Notwithstanding, God ordained so that they were not ill-used, but yet at last the good mother got them away and took them to live with her. After this the said Sir Harry James turned again and rose up from his fall becoming a Catholic, and then fell into great trouble for his conscience, insomuch that at length he was condemned in premunire and into perpetual imprisonment, where he continued in the faith all his life, and died in prison, but the mother brought up her children with great care, so that three of the daughters became religious in several Orders; one was a professed Poor Clare at Graveling (Gravelines), this other named Catharine, was recommended to our monastery, and the third was sent to St Benedict's at Brussels. So did Almighty God disperse the sisters on earth that they might meet together in heaven for wanting the company of each other in this life; which said Catharine was now professed at the age of eighteen years, on SS. Probus and Hyacinthus' day in the Octave of our Blessed Lady's Nativity.

In the year 1618, upon the 5th of August, was professed

Mary Thorowgood, lay-sister, of whose friends we cannot declare particularly, because she died before the writing hereof, but this we know that they were Catholics; she brought £60 to the house, which showeth she had good kindred.

This same year, upon the 20th of August, was professed Sister Benedicta Colman of Staffordshire. Her mother died very blessedly, and she came over with a Benedictine monk who was her father's priest and placed her first at Douay in a French monastery of his Order, but not liking to remain there, she chanced to come here as she went to Sichem, and begging the place was admitted; so now made her profession on St Bernard's day.

This year, 1618, upon the 26th of August, died Sister Barbara Wilford, being of the first company that came from St Ursula's to begin our monastery, and of this nun we may truly say that she passed through fire and water, for she waded at her beginnings through great and grievous temptations, and in carrying herself well, very great consolations succeeded. She being some years Procuratrix when Sister Margaret Tremain was made Vestiaria, and having all the care of temporal things, was, notwithstanding, so taken up in spirit and absorbed in God amidst all employments that her works were small distraction unto her. She was a virtuous religious, of a good nature, very charitable to others, and ready to help in any need, humble and peaceful in her conversation, strict to herself and of great penance with leave, insomuch that when she was in the world with her cousin the Lady Harbert (Herbert) she would take most hard disciplines all of a gore blood. She was professed at St Ursula's in the year 1598.

The year 1618, upon the 29th of September, died Sister Elizabeth Dumford, who being of the first company that came from St Ursula's, was taken in place of a lay-sister, but she did not long perform that labour, only until the first lay-sister came into the house the midsummer after, Catharine Noe, but was employed in other offices, especially in looking to the sick. She was a good religious, and although of a sharp nature, yet very kind and careful of the sick that were at her charge, and serviceable to others but very hard to herself; so that she could scarce afford herself a good bit of meat, and when she was Cellaress at St Ursula's even that poor portion which they had there, she commonly gave away to others and lived herself upon brown rye bread and porridge or suchlike slight thing. Moreover, when leave permitted her, she used cruel disciplines with pins, wherefore at length our Lord rewarded her labours with a blessed and sweet death, for she spake so devoutly about her last hour as was great edification to us all, and in that manner rendereth happily her soul to God. She was professed with the foresaid Sister Barbara Wilford, and with Sister Margaret Tremain, as is before mentioned, in the year 1598.

PREFACE TO CHAPTER THE FIFTH

The Stonehouse and Hansom families. Cruelty of the President of the North. Elizabeth Foster, a hitherto unknown martyr. The Syon Chronicle. The Fosters or Forsters of Yorkshire. Sir Richard Forster and the Pontoise MSS. The Lawsons of Brough. The Balthorpes. The haunted walk of Huddington House. The Winters and their fellow-conspirators. Sister Mary Winter. A place of martyrdom outside Worcester identified.

"THE great veneration my father bore to his grandmother, Elizabeth Stonehouse," writes Mr Joseph S. Hansom, "caused me to make researches," which we have been allowed to use to illustrate our chronicler's narrative of the two Sisters Stonehouse, given at the end of this article. The venerable lady just referred to, "Elizabeth Stonehouse, used specially to mention her relatives going with members of the Radcliffe family to Stokesley, to be fined for recusancy. The North Riding (Yorkshire) Record Society's publications fully confirm this at Quarter Sessions, held at many places."

Families of the good old English stock, claiming unbroken Catholic descent, whether of the gentry or commonalty, are to this day far more numerous in the North than in the South of England. The firmness of the sturdy yeoman of the "North countree," afforded a stubborn support, not to be found in the same degree elsewhere, to the ancient county families, on whom it rested to bear the brunt of battle from the first. In every class, the women showed themselves more courageous than the men. We owe much to the long-suffering heroism of the

Northern Catholics from 1561 to 1631, under the sanguinary tyranny of the Ecclesiastical Commission, and more especially under the ferocious President of the North, Henry Hastings, Earl of Huntingdon. To the splendid records contained in Father Morris's Third Series of *Troubles*, I propose here making one or two additions. The persecutor just named, towers above all his compeers for remorseless cruelty. His very lineaments expressed an innate ferocity, and his mother, Catharine Pole, granddaughter of Blessed Margaret Pole, is said to have habitually shrunk in terror from the sight of her fiendish son. His fury fell heavily on all that were loyal to the Faith of Christ, especially on defenceless women, who braved his hatred with undaunted courage, and his prisons of York Castle and the Ousebridge were full to overflowing with these noble victims, amid every conceivable horror of filth and infection. No class of Catholic escaped his tyranny; with the honoured names of Lawson, Vavasour, Stapleton, Constable, Towneley, Babthorpe, Hungate, Ingleby, Fairfax, Fitzherbert, Dolman, Clitherow, and many another, we find on his lists Bickerdikes, Holdens, Lunds, and others, whose families still live on in Yorkshire and Lancashire villages, described as labourers, tailors, servants, fishermen, common soldiers, and the like, tortured or hanged for harbouring or helping priests.

I leave to our chronicler the beautiful story of the youth of Christopher Stonehouse, the father of the two holy lay-sisters. His life was a long martyrdom; in 1593 he escaped from York Castle, and in 1604 was secretly married to his second wife (his first was Frances Smith), Ursula ——. In 1611, 1612, 1614, and 1616, he was fined for not going to the Protestant church. His sons, Thomas, Cuthbert, and Christopher, trod in their heroic father's footsteps and shared his cruel sufferings. Another son, Andrew, born at East Row, 1597, studied at St Omer's and in Spain, entered the English College, Rome, in 1617, became a Jesuit, was prisoner in York Castle from 1651 to

1660, and died in 1663. Foley, vol. iii., p. 258, has failed to identify his origin, being not unnaturally deceived by the spelling, *Stonas*, which he thought was a Latin form for Stone, whereas it only represents the broad Yorkshire for Stonehouse, and is very often met with in the recusant lists for members of this family. Stone was, however, one of his aliases. Foley also gives Easbrow by mistake instead of East Row, a hamlet near Dunsley, the home of the Stonehouses, two miles from Whitby.

Margery Stonas, Jane Stonas, and many others of the family figure on the recusants' lists, but my space forbids me to go on. Two of the brothers migrated to London where they lived with other recusants in John Street, St Sepulchre's parish. Now I must take leave of this family of holy Catholic yeomen, a noble type of a vast number of others of the same condition in the northern counties, and pass to an almost forgotten martyr. Among the victims of the Earl of Huntingdon's treatment of his prisoners at York, was one Mrs Elizabeth Foster (or Forster) martyr in the Ousebridge Prison in 1577, not to be confused with Mrs Isabel Foster, daughter of the Venerable Richard Langley, martyr, and who died in York Castle in 1587. She is barely mentioned by name, except in the Syon Chronicle from which I subjoin an extract, but Stokesley, where Elizabeth Stonehouse used to pay her fines, was a manor of Sir Richard Forster, whose daughter was the Benedictine Abbess of Pontoise, and of whom more presently. The Syon chronicler writes :—

"Mrs Foster, our Father's mother, was persecuted and apprehended upon two or three accounts, one of which was, because the town wherein she dwelt was wholly Catholic, and many of them reconciled to the Church ; so that sometimes when the bell rung to service the minister shut up the church doors, because few or none came to his ministry or service, which was principally imputed to Mrs Foster, who was charged to be so great and monstrous a Papist, that the neighbours and towns thereabout were said to be led and perverted by her. Another reason was the continual alms she bestowed on the poor, especially on All Souls' Day and such like times, whereby they proved her to be a notorious and bold maintainer of the old and superstitious Popery and Religion, and that she and her daughters with Mrs Clitherow and others their companions had already with their meetings and assemblies, and even at their gossiping and feasting done much hurt in York, and would do much more if they were permitted. Hereupon Mrs Clitherow was apprehended and afterwards executed; and Mrs Foster with her two daughters, Mistress Frances and Mrs Ann Foster, were committed to prison, whose imprisonment being long and painful, and the prison standing over the great river Ouse, on the middle of the bridge, and consequently cold, moist, and very unwholesome, and the corner wherein she was kept very little, close, and uncomfortable, quite contrary to her nature and custom, her life was thereby shortened, and with divers infirmities occasioned by her prison she was brought to her end and death. At which time she did not neglect through womanish fear and weakness, nor was she unmindful of the cause for which she died, but stirred up with a devout and deep consideration thereof, she called for Dr Darbyshire, then prisoner, and her ghostly Father, with the rest of the Catholics in that jail, in whose presence she made a very zealous profession of her faith, and took them all for witness of it, that she being then in her full understanding and perfect senses, died there in the cause of Christ's Church; thanking God most humbly for it in a devout speech to that purpose. After this she called for the last Sacraments, desiring the company to assist her with their prayers, and after she had received the said Sacraments with great devotion and tears, she desired her ghostly Father to write for her the following words:—

"'I, Ann Foster, though most unworthy of this grace of God, do die in the profession of the Catholic Faith, and likewise have received all the last Sacraments of the

Catholic Church, and, finally, I am to be buried after the rite and with the ceremonies of the true Church of Christ, wherefore my last will and testament is this, that no minister, nor any other such person have anything to do with my dead body.'

"And this writing which was nothing else than a conformity to her faith, and the cause of her imprisonment and death, she besought her ghostly Father to put in her hand when she was dead; who considering her great zeal and blessed motion satisfied her desire, which the minister of the parish and the heretics finding in her hand and reading it, it is almost incredible how they chafed at it, but especially the minister, who put the whole city in an uproar, and also complained to the Queen's Council, and to the Earl of Huntingdon, a puritan, and the Queen's President in that city. He complained also to the Archbishop and the Dean and Chapter, and not only so, but most inhumanly caused the dead corpse to be brought out of prison, and laid openly on the bridge in the common street, for all the world to gaze and wonder at. In the mean season, the President and Council, Archbishop and Chapter, were assembled about the bold and traitorous act, as they termed it, of writing her last will, and immediately sent for Mr Foster, our confessor's Father, blaming him for this heinous trespass of his wife; to whom he answered that he had not offended her Majesty in anything, and that he was not there when his wife died; which is all (said he), that I can say in this matter; finally, while some gave sentence to bury her in some dunghill, others would have her cast into the river from the bridge on which she lay, Mr Foster besought their honours to consider that she was but a woman, and being now dead, never could offend them any more; whereat the Council was discontented, and asked him how he durst intreat for such a Papist, and began to call him in question for his conscience, affirming that they knew well enough what he was, and would then have committed him, if some commissioners on the bench had not favoured him. Notwithstanding all this, he replied thus; that whatever she was, she was his wife, and he bound by the law of God to love, honour, and protect her, and this being the last and least thing he could do for her, he humbly besought them to give him leave to bury her; which request by friends present was at last agreed to in this manner, that he might take her out of the minister's power and bury her where he would, without any other solemnity than only to put her in the grave. Very glad was he of this licence, since they could not have done a greater benefit either to him, or her, for he knew very well the great love and devotion she had to the Earl of Northumberland, who was martyred in York and buried in Holy Cross Church, whose grave Mr Foster opened, and without any hindrance laid her with that Blessed Martyr's relics; and thus two of her earnest desires in one instant fulfilled, according to the Prophet in the 144th Psalm: *Voluntatem timentium se faciet:* God will fulfill the desires of those that fear Him. One thing she desired was to be buried in the church where the foresaid Martyr was laid; the other to be buried without any heretical ceremonies. This news of the manner of his mother's death was brought to our Father in Rome, and was more fully related to him by her own ghostly Father, Mr John Marsh, who not long ago died a professed religious in Syon."

A companion picture to the death of Ann Foster, the gentle martyr who lies buried in York at the feet of Blessed Thomas Percy, is found in the martyrdom of her daughter-in-law, Isabel Foster (or Forster), the daughter of Venerable Richard Langley, who was executed at York on 1st December 1586; Ann Foster's martyrdom being consummated in 1578, and Isabel Foster winning her crown a year after her father in 1587.

The Fosters, or Forsters, who were seated at Adderstone, or Edderstone, in Northumberland, in the earlier part of the fourteenth century, derived their family name from the hereditary office of Forester to the Bishop of Durham. Fortunate marriages served to increase the wealth and influence of the family, but for the intelligence of this narrative it is enough to note that Florence, daughter of Thomas, Lord Wharton, gave her hand in marriage to Thomas Forster of Adderstone (whose will is dated in 1589). John, probably a younger son, now appears as Forster of Earswick in Yorkshire. After his wife's death in Ousebridge Prison, related in our last number, he narrowly escaped imprisonment for his religion. His wife's name is given in the Yorkshire Visitations as Agnes Lascelles, but she is called Anne in the Syon Records.

Father Joseph Seth Foster, Bridgettine monk, to whose heroic charity and long-suffering we owe the preservation in those stormy times of the Syon community, first claims our attention among the children of John and Anne (or Agnes) Foster. One of Cardinal Allen's earliest disciples in the work of the seminaries, by which the stamping out of the faith in England was effectually checked, he took his M.A. at Douay, and in 1875 was sent with the Rev. George Birkett to Rome, to aid by his winning prudence and holy example the formation of the English College. His first impressions are told by himself in a MS. among the Syon Records: "Every one (of the English students) went where they would, and only when they would to the schools, nor kept any such exercise or disputation at home or abroad, as all the other seminaries do in Rome." To place the College under Jesuit control was the remedy he counselled, and he saw it effected during his stay. At Rome he received the news of his mother's death in prison, from the lips of an eyewitness. Returning to Douay in May 1582, he was employed in teaching philosophy at Rheims, till, in 1584, he was ordered to England. One Browne, a spy of Leicester's, had furnished an accurate account of his movements and appearance, and all was arranged for his arrest on landing.

At Rouen he visited the English nuns; the desire of a religious life, which he had long secretly nourished, became irresistible, and with Allen's willing consent he was clothed and professed a Bridgettine monk. He led the community from Rouen to Lisbon, and after forty-four years of a saintly life in the cloister, died at Lisbon in 1628.

His brother, William, inherited the family estates at Earswick, in the parish of Huntingdon, some six miles north of York, and at Osbaldwick, two miles east of the same city. William Foster had been brought up a Protestant. It was probably about the time of his mother's martyrdom that he embraced the Catholic Faith, for in that same year (1578) his kinsman, Father Richard Holtby, S.J., arrived in Yorkshire, by whom he was received into the Church, the fruit of a martyred parent's prayers. His second wife was Isabel, the daughter of Venerable Richard Langley, a gentleman of ancient family and great wealth, executed at York, 1st December 1586, for harbouring the two priests, Mush and Johnson. A MS. published by Father Pollen, S.J., says that Richard Langley kept an underground house as a refuge for priests. In fact, our Louvain Chronicle states that four priests were in hiding in his house at Grimthorpe when the pursuivants broke into it. Two were not discovered, the other two escaped from prison, so that the holy martyr's double prayer was granted, in their safety and in his own crown. His irrepressible gaiety in prison astonished his jailers, and like a bridegroom to his wedding, he went to his death on the scaffold.

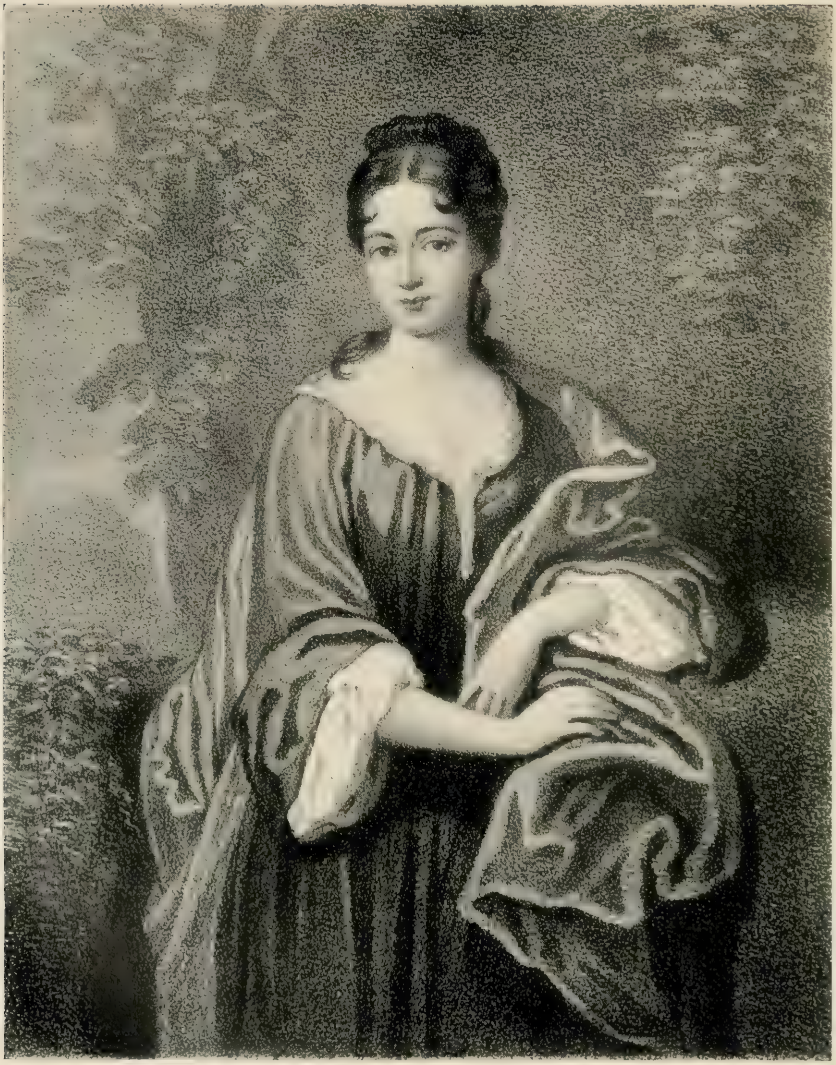
Richard Langley's daughter, Isabel Foster, died from the sufferings of her prison in York Castle. "She was apprehended," says Father Grene, "as she was coming from the prison (whither she had gone with alms for the confessors), and carried before the deans, who committed her to the Castle close prisoner. Before her death, she was heard to call upon her father, desiring him to stay with her, or to let her go to him; at which one of the standers-by said: 'I am here, what would you have me to do?' She said: 'I speak not to you; it is my own father; do you not see him by you?' The next day she died, to the great comfort of the beholders, 3rd December 1887, and was buried among the rest under the Castle wall." Of one of her sisters our Chronicle says, that "she threw herself away in marriage on Martin Wickham, a yeoman who was no Catholic." Their daughter became a lay-sister at St Monica's, and died there in 1672 in her seventy-eighth year, "laborious all her life, and a downright, good, sincere woman," writes the good chronicler. William Foster's first wife was Elizabeth Thweng, of a Yorkshire family that has added two of its sons to the roll of our martyr-priests.

After the martyrdom of his second wife, he married Margaret (or Mary), the daughter of Thomas Booth of Killingholme in Lincolnshire: but being weary of so many scenes of horror, he resigned his estates to his son, Richard, went beyond seas, and died at Antwerp.

Father Foster's two sisters, Anne and Frances, shared the horrors of their mother's imprisonment in the Ousebridge Kidcote. The former married Richard Smith (perhaps of Eyton Bridge, near Whitby). The aureole of martyrdom was succeeded in the family annals by the grace of the priesthood and of vocations to the cloister. Among Father Foster's relatives in the Syon community were the two Sisters Wharton, Sister Clare Foster, his niece, and Sister Frances Holtby. In a MS. of Abbess Beckett of Syon, I read: "Father Foster endeavoured also to augment the number of the brothers, and sent for a nephew of his out of Spain. His name was Mr William Smith. He made profession of our holy rule, and was Confessor-General after the death of his uncle. The said Father Smith had a sister, Sister Bridget Smith, and in her time she had a niece, who was Sister Mary Smith. Sister Mary Meade, who is now our Abbess, is niece to Sister Mary Smith; a prudent and discreet woman." She then tells how Sister Mary Smith's father presented the community with a shipload of wood at her reception.

Yet another of the family died in bonds for the faith; Father Thomas Foster, *alias* Wharton, perished in Lincoln Jail in 1648; a younger son of William Foster. Besides his sister, the Syon nun, he had another, Frances, married to Francis Hodgson of Kirkburne.

A little MS. volume, still in its original richly stamped and embossed binding, from which we learn the subsequent career of Sir Richard, the eldest son of William Foster of Earswick, by his wife, Isabel Langley, is preserved by the Teignmouth nuns. On one side of the binding is stamped in gilt letters, "Henry Abergavenny"; on the other, "Wrath and hastynesse ar (*sic*) evyl counsellours." The manuscript is in the handwriting of Lord Abergavenny's daughter, Abbess Neville of Pontoise, and contains the annals of that community (now St Scholastica's Abbey, Teignmouth) from its beginning to 1684. Concerning Abbess Christina Forster (1656-1662), Abbess Neville writes: "Her father was Sir Richard Forster, Lord of Stokesley and many other fair tenements in the North part of England. He was Chief Treasurer to the Queen-mother of England, wife of Charles the First of Great Britain. Her mother was one Mrs Anne (Jane) Middleton, of a very illustrious and pious family. Sir Richard Forster at Boulogne and Pontoise gave this community, all money, the full sum of 41,000 livres. . . . Sir Richard Forster still continued his bounty and kindness to his daughter, and as long as his health and strength permitted, came often to visit and assist her with his purse and advice. But now old age and a palsy humour detained him from going and taking the satisfaction of such a visit, and called upon him to prepare himself, as he did most piously, for his happy end. Having done all that became the duty of a good Christian, assisted by Rev. Father Wigmore, he most joyously rendered his soul into the hands of his Creator. His body was embalmed and in a



Lady Lucy Herbert.

Sister of Winifred, Countess of Nithsdale. Prioress of Augustinian Nuns at Bruges; died 1744.

From Portrait at Everingham.

[*Face page* 175.

leaden coffin brought to Pontoise, and deposited in the Abbey of St Martin's. Upon his grave at St Martin's these words are written: 'Here lyes Messier Richard Forster, Knight and Baronet, and Baron of Stokesley, Treasurer-General to ye Queene of Great Britain.' He died the 27th of January 1661. As the body passed to St Martin's, by her Ladyship's (Abbess Forster's) appointment, contrary to the advice of other friends, it was brought to our court, and she herself came down and prayed by it." Sir Richard was created a baronet by Charles I. The second and third baronets also bore the name of Richard, doubtless so christened out of devotion to their martyred ancestor.

Sister Dorothy Lawson was professed at St Monica's in 1618, and died on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1628. Two of her sisters were Benedictine nuns at Ghent, and her brother, Ralph, died while a student at Douay College. They were the children of Roger Lawson of Heaton and of Dorothy Constable the above-mentioned Mrs Dorothy Lawson. Originally seated at Cramlington, some ten miles north of Newcastle-on-Tyne, the old Northumbrian family of Lawson, in the reign of Henry VIII., became, by purchase from the crown, the owners of the manor of Byker with Heaton manor-house, a little to the east of Newcastle. Sir Ralph Lawson acquired Brough, the actual family seat, near Catterick in Yorkshire, by his marriage, in 1568, with Elizabeth, daughter of Roger Burgh of Brough.

The frequency of monastic vocations was a noteworthy characteristic of the family even in earlier times. William Lawson, a Carthusian monk, of Mount Grace in 1518, was uncle to James, merchant-adventurer, and twice Mayor of Newcastle. The last Benedictine Prioresses of Nesham and of St Bartholomew's, Newcastle, were two sisters of the said Mayor, Jane and Agnes Lawson. Roger, our Sister Dorothy's father, who died before his father, Sir Ralph Lawson of Brough, was the great-grandson of James.

He married Dorothy, daughter of Sir Henry Constable of Burton-Constable, and the biography of this heroic lady, written by her Jesuit confessor, and published at Newcastle by permission of Sir William Lawson, Bart., in 1855, gives us an unusual picture of Catholic life in the days of the penal laws, and a singularly pleasing one.

Mrs Dorothy Lawson's mother and her mother-in-law had both been among the Earl of Huntingdon's prisoners in York Castle, and the latter had given birth to a child while in prison. Her mother was the sister of Robert, first Lord Dormer, and of Jane Dormer, the saintly Duchess of Feria, and Dorothy Constable was born at the seat of the Dormer family at Winge in Buckinghamshire. She was only seventeen when, at her parent's wish, she was married to Roger Lawson of Heaton. Her Jesuit biographer thus quaintly describes the progress of the bridal party from Winge to Brough:—

"From Burton (a halting-place) she departed to Brough with a far greater retinue than before; but it most increased at Leeman, a village six miles from the end of her journey, where she was forced to make a halt by Sir Ralph Lawson, who, at his first approach with a hundred horse of his attendance, saluted her with the ordinary salute of the kingdom, but not permitting her to alight: then he took her from horse himself, imparted his benediction, which she humbly craved on her knees in the dust, and mounted her again on a snow-white steed which he had bought for her, caparisoned with crimson velvet, embroidered with swans and martens of pearl; these the arms of Lawson, those of Brough whose daughter Sir Ralph had married. Between the two knights, her father on the right, and her father-in-law on the left, she rode more like an Esther or princess than an esquire's spouse." Her first thought on arriving at Brough was "her Evensong and examen of conscience."

With Mr Anthony Holtby (whom the writer calls gentleman-in-waiting to Sir Henry Constable), the brother of Father Richard Holtby, S.J., then in charge of the English Jesuit Mission, she at once arranged that the Father should come for a week to Brough, for the settling of her spiritual life and providing for a chaplain. As yet she observed the usual precautions of those days for secrecy, her husband being still a Protestant. For a time she remained at Brough, and the conversion of all Sir Ralph's nine children, including her husband, shows how God blessed the zeal that was tempered with incomparable meekness. With the increase of her family, it was found necessary to leave Brough for Heaton where I read that on her arrival she found but one Catholic family in the parish, and at her death left not a single Protestant one, while "six altars were erected for divine service," although during her husband's lifetime all was conducted with the strict watchfulness against discovery universal among Catholics in that evil time.

Roger Lawson died in 1614, and the holy widow, leaving Heaton, built a large house on the banks of the Tyne, which she named St Anthony's from a tradition that the Saint of Padua had formerly been venerated on the spot, "his picture being decently placed in a tree near the river Tyne for the comfort of seamen." Now begins the extraordinary part of her career. Casting concealment to the winds, she caused the name of Jesus in colossal letters to be inscribed on the side of the house nearest the river, so that crowds of sailors, especially Catholic foreigners, came for Mass and the Sacraments to her chapel, which she had dedicated to our Blessed Lady. The first stone was laid by Father Holtby, who often lived at Heborne, the seat of the Hodgson's only four miles away. (Her son, Henry, married Anne Hodgson of Heborne.) From her biographer I abridge what follows: "Her chapel was rich, the altar vested with various habiliments as usual in Catholic countries. Mass every day in the morning, Evensong about four in the afternoon, with the Litany of Loretto: between eight and nine at night, Litanies of the

Saints. On festival days, Sermon or Catechism in the afternoon, to which later the neighbours' children came, she distributing medals and Agnus Dei's to those that answered best. In Holy Week, Tenebrae with the candlesticks of fifteen lights ; on the Thursday a sumptuous sepulchre, rich with precious stones, the neighbours watching before it day and night ; and on Friday the creeping to the Cross. On Holy Saturday, the Benediction of the Paschal Candle, and at Mass a glorious altar, and the ringing of many little bells at the *Gloria in excelsis.* Well-nigh a hundred would make their Easter Communion on Easter Sunday in her chapel. On Christmas night were celebrated three Masses, which being ended all break their fast with a Christmas pie and depart to their houses ; in a room near the chapel, a crib, with music to honour our Lord's Nativity."

This went on for nine years ; all Catholic houses in the neighbourhood, says her chaplain, were visited and harried by pursuivants, but not even once did they visit St Anthony's, and the Jesuit Fathers made their annual retreats there, half a dozen at a time. When one of her chaplains, Father Morse, the martyr, was in Newcastle Prison, she openly visited him, provided him and another imprisoned priest with all necessaries for saying Mass, as well as with clothes and food. On Palm Sunday, 1632, this valiant woman died the death of the saints. Miracles are said to have been wrought by her after death. Her obsequies were most glorious : some twenty barges formed a procession on the river with that which conveyed the body, a body of horsemen being stationed at intervals along the banks.

On arriving after nightfall at Newcastle, "they found the streets shining with tapers, as light as if it had been noon. The magistrates and aldermen attended at the landing-place to wait on the coffin, which they received covered with a fine black velvet cloth, and a white satin cross, and carried it but to the church door, where they delivered it to the Catholics only, who with another priest laid it with Catholic ceremonies in the grave." A strange sight indeed for those times.

Of Mrs Dorothy Lawson's three children, who entered religion, I have spoken above. Her son, Henry, married Anne, daughter of Robert Hodgson of Heborne, and his son, Henry, was slain in the royal cause at Melton Mowbray; another of his sons and a daughter took their vows in the Order of St Benedict. In the next generation we have one son a Benedictine, another a Jesuit, one daughter a Benedictine nun at Pontoise, and four others, nuns of Mary Ward's Institute. Sister Catherine Lawson died an Augustinian nun at Paris in 1676, and the grace of vocations has never ceased in the family down to the present day.

Lady Grace Babthorpe tells in the subjoined chapter the story of the Babthorpes of Babthorpe. We add a few notes, chiefly from Father Morris's *Troubles.*

From Osbert de Babthorpe, the founder of the family, to Father Albert Babthorpe, S.J., who died in 1720, the last of his race and name, this noble and most pious Catholic family numbers twenty generations. Their worldly estate was at its highest under the Plantagenet monarchs, and declined under the Tudors. Two Sir Ralph Babthorpes, father and son, holding offices in the household of the saintly King Henry VI., were slain in that King's cause at the battle of St Alban's in 1455.

But far exceeding all earthly splendours was the scene witnessed in the Church of St Monica's Priory at Louvain, on the morning of the Feast of St Peter's Chains in 1621, when the aged lady, widow of Sir Ralph Babthorpe, and her young grandchild, Frances, took their vows together before the altar, and her son, Ralph, priest of the Society of Jesus, preached the profession sermon. The Feast was an appropriate one in the case of the venerable lady, who had undergone a long imprisonment for her loyalty to the See of Peter, and was, as her chaplain wrote, in her lifetime, "the chief pillar of religion," in that part of the country. "In the house (Osgodby) where I lived," writes Father Sharpe, S.J., "we were continually two priests. . . . Though there lived together in it three knights with their ladies and their families, yet we had all our servants Catholic. On the Sundays we locked up the doors and all came to Mass; we had our sermons, catechisms, and spiritual lessons every Sunday and holiday. On the workdays we had for the most part two Masses, and of them the one for the servants at six o'clock in the morning, at which the gentlemen, every one of them without fail, and the ladies, if they were not sick, would even in the midst of winter of their own accord be present; and the other we had at eight o'clock for those who were absent from the first. In the afternoon at four o'clock we had Evensong, and after that Matins, when all the knights and their ladies would be present, and stay at their prayers all the time the priests were at Evensong and Matins." The three knights were Sir Ralph Babthorpe, his son, Sir William, and his son-in-law, Sir George Palmes. (Foley, vol. iii., p. 202.) Such was the life of this holy matron after her release from prison, till her husband's death, when she exchanged the garb of a high-born lady for the white robe of our Canonesses at Louvain, though we cannot say if we should apply to her what Father Grene writes of her fellow-sufferer in the same northern persecution, the heroic Anne Lander, when he describes her attire: "Her brave gown, trimly set out with fringe and lace, her golden coifs and shining cowles, her gorgeous hats adorned with gold, her fine frizzled locks, which were wont to be laid abroad for a show," and the rest.

Lady Babthorpe was singularly blest in her children and her posterity. Besides Ralph, who preached at her profession, Thomas, his younger brother, entered the Society and was Rector, first of the English College, Rome, and afterwards of St Omer's. Their elder brother Robert (in religion Dom Mellitus), was one of the Benedictines who were sent from Dieulonard to make a foundation at St Malo's; "an industrious missioner, in which function he died in the North," writes Bennet Weldon. From the *Chronicle* we learn that he was imprisoned for the faith. The eldest son, Sir William, sold his manors of Babthorpe and Osgodby, entered the Spanish service, and was slain in battle at Ardres in 1535. We shall meet later on two other descendants of Lady Babthorpe among our Louvain nuns; two others were professed with the Canonesses at Bruges, and four entered the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whereof two were Superioresses-General. Besides the two Jesuits mentioned above, four of Lady Babthorpe's descendants entered the Society.

Turning to her own family, we learn from our chronicler that she was the daughter of William Birnand of Brimham, Recorder of York in 1573, a family subsequently represented by that of Trappes—Birnand of Nidd in Yorkshire, and as we read through the names of those heroic Catholic families, such as Towneley, Lomax, Trappes, Norton, and others, with whom the Birnands of Brimham and Knaresborough were allied by marriage, they recall many a tale of patient suffering and undaunted heroism in defence of the faith of our Fathers. Their long sufferings cannot but have been a source of blessing to England, and to bring to light what we can of their history must needs be fruitful to us who live in days when that heroic struggle might easily be forgotten.

Sister Grace Babthorpe lived fourteen years of cloistered life, till her death in 1635; her granddaughter, Sister Frances, died in 1656. The two lay-sisters, Anne Stonehouse and Ursula Whitseal, had both been attached to Lady Babthorpe's household before entering religion at St Monica's.

Sister Mary Thursby, described by our chronicler as "the daughter of Christopher Thursby of Buckenhall, in Essex," seems to be, as I am informed by Mr Gillow, the eldest daughter of Christopher Thoresby of Durward

Hall, Bocking, Essex, by his wife, Audrey, daughter of Nicholas Timperley of Huntelsham, Suffolk.

We may now revert to a family mentioned in our last chapter.

A superstition long lingered, perhaps still lingers, round Huddington House in Worcestershire, situated in a corner of Feckenham Forest. It was the seat of the family of Wintour, or Winter, to whom the villages of Huddington and Himbleton belonged. "Lady Wintour's Walk," in front of the mansion used to be shunned after nightfall, for here people said the ghost of the Lady of Huddington used to walk. Gertrude, the daughter of John Talbot of Grafton, was the wife of Robert Winter of Huddington executed with his two brothers for his share in the Gunpowder Plot. In the dark days of November 1605, arms, ammunition, and horses had been collected at Huddington for the intended rising of the disaffected Catholics in Worcestershire and Warwickshire, had the plot been successful. A watch was kept at the window for the expected messenger from London, while the lady of the house awaited her husband's return on the walk. It had been agreed that when the messenger arrived on the brow of a neighbouring eminence, if he waved his hat, it was a sign that all was well, if he rode on with head covered, all was lost.

The doings of the conspirators after Guy Fawkes's arrest are well known; how Catesby and his companions rode all through the night and brought the tidings to their comrades at the Red Lion Inn at Dunchurch, and how thence they rode in furious haste Coventry way, crossing the Roman road known as the Fosse at Princethorpe, where now stands the Benedictine Priory: then on through Wapenbury and by the old church of Weston, now on the estates of Lord Clifford, and how finally they were brought to bay at Holbeach House in Staffordshire. To the anxious lady at Huddington the message was brought with all speed, and when the band of worn-out horsemen rode up to the walk, which for long years after her spectre was said to haunt, she knew that all was lost.

The story has its interest for us, for Robert and Gertrude Winter of Huddington were the parents of Sister Mary Winter, professed at St Monica's in 1617. To say the truth, it is rather unlikely that the Lady of Huddington, was privy to her husband's part in the conspiracy. When examined, by order of the Council, about those who came to her house at Huddington on the evening of the 6th of November, and rode away next morning at sunrise, she said "she heard no talk of the rebellion." Ten years afterwards, Mary Winter gave herself to God in religion, and lived seven years in the cloister, dying in 1624. Her two uncles had, like her father, perished on the scaffold for their share in the Plot. Her aunt, Dorothy Winter, was the wife of John Grant of Norbrook, who was executed with the rest of his fellow-conspirators, a moody gentleman described by his friend, Father John Gerard as being "fierce as a lion and of undaunted courage," so that for terror of his violence the priest-hunting pursuivants would leave his house unmolested. In a letter dated from Chastleton House, Thomas Winter writes to John Grant: "If I may, with my sister's leave, let me entreat you, brother, to come on Saturday next to meet us at Chastleton (Catesby's residence at the time). I can assure you of kind welcome and your aquaintance with my cousin Catesby, will nothing repent you. I would wish Doll here, but our life is monastical. Commend me to your mother, and so, *adio.*—Thomas Winter." John Talbot of Grafton, was the gentleman who drove the fugitive conspirators from his door. Father Gerard's narrative gives us a high idea of the Winter family. Concerning Robert, Sister Mary's father, he writes: "Mr Robert Winter was an earnest Catholic, a wise man, and of grave and sober carriage and very stout, as all of that name have been esteemed." Thomas, his brother, is praised as a good scholar and linguist, a brave soldier and of noble bearing and delightful conversation, "very devout and zealous in his faith and careful to come often to the Sacraments, offensive to no man and fit for any employment: I wish," adds Father Gerard, "he had been employed in some better business." John, the youngest of the three brothers, devoted himself while under sentence of death to the conversion of a condemned felon. All died deploring their crime with sentiments of the deepest piety and resignation. John suffered at Redhill, Worcester, with the two Jesuit martyrs, Father Oldcorn and the lay-brother Ralph Ashley. The writer remembers that when a boy he was taken by his father to the spot and told that here two Jesuits had been hanged. It was the corner of a field made by the meeting of two roads, outside the city and at the top of a hill, if he remembers aright. But on this point a Benedictine correspondent writes: "To give you a little more correct information as to the exact place of martyrdom of Father Oldcorne and Br. Ralph Ashley, I had the information from the late Robert Berkeley, Esq., of Spetchley, a good authority on matters affecting Worcester and its neighbourhood. You are correct in saying that they were martyred at Redhill, but not in the corner of the field made by the meeting of the two roads. (Here follows a pen-and-ink sketch by my correspondent.) Mr Berkeley told me the execution was not in the angle of the field made by the two roads, but at the spot in the garden where I have marked." (The spot is immediately to the right of the division of roads as one comes from Worcester, and is now occupied by a pear tree as shown on the sketch.)

The ancient family of Wintour had held lands in Worcestershire in the reign of Henry VI., and had intermarried with the houses of Neville, Throckmorton, Catesby, Tresham, Bracebridge, and many another. Robert Winter, grandfather of the conspirators, was twice married, and the three brothers executed for Cecil's Plot were his descendants by his first wife, Catharine Throckmorton. Sir

Edward Winter who married Lady Anne Somerset, daughter of the Earl of Worcester, was his descendant by his second wife, Elizabeth Wyrrall. The disaster of the Plot was the ruin of the Huddington branch. At that ill-omened house the fugitive conspirators met, confessed and were absolved, before separating for flight. There they were assembled to the number of forty. Poor Gertrude Winter's after-life was one long suffering for her faith. In the State Papers we find in 1607 a grant of the benefit of her recusancy to Archibald Napier, some needy hanger-on of the Court. Six months before a grant had been made to Sir William Anstruther of the moiety of all goods of Sir Edward Digby, Rookwood, Tresham, Robert Winter, and others. Quieter times followed with the diminished fortunes of the family, always noted for its loyal adherence to the Catholic Faith. Thus, in a rare little volume, called *England's Worthies*, published in 1647, we read of Sir John Winter, "that active Papist" in command of the Welsh royalist forces defending Beachley, at the conflux of the Wye and Severn, against the rebels under Colonel Massey.

Helen Winter of Cooksey, a sister of our Sister Mary, is recorded as having been a noble benefactress to the Jesuit mission. Her splendid and costly gifts of vestments are still to be seen at Stonyhurst and Worcester. Sister Mary found, among her religious sisters, Margaret Garnett and Dorothy Rookwood, whose nearest and dearest had perished in the same catastrophe. Sister Mary had gone to her reward a year before the community were joined by the daughter of Lord Mounteagle. Her mother was the sister of Francis Tresham, another of the ill-fated band of Cecil's victims. Their connection with nuns and priests is rather remarkable. The two Wrights were uncles of the saintly Mary Ward, whose aunt had married Thomas Percy; Abbess Tresham, of Syon, had died at the family mansion in Northamptonshire in 1559, and a generation earlier, we find a Sister Catesby among the Syon nuns, and the Rookwood family was represented in half a dozen religious orders in those days. Robert and Gertrude Winter are duly commemorated on the anniversaries by the nuns at St Augustine's.

To the Babthorpe notes, I have to add that the wife of Ambrose Rookwood the conspirator, and the wife of Sir William Babthorpe were sisters, daughters of William Tyrwhitt and granddaughters of Sir Robert, as our Chronicle states concerning the latter.

CHAPTER V

FROM THE PROFESSION OF SISTERS STONEHOUSE AND LAWSON TO THAT OF SISTER GRACE BABTHORPE AND HER GRANDCHILD, SISTER FRANCES BABTHORPE, WITH THE HISTORY OF THE BABTHORPES, BROOKES, AND GOULDINGS, 1618-1621.

THE same year, 1618, was professed Ann Stonehouse, lay-sister, daughter unto Christopher Stonehouse, a good man and a most constant Catholic, dwelling in Dunsley, two miles from Whitby in Yorkshire. This man's father dying when he was a little boy, the officers took away a house which he had bought, because he was a Catholic, and left his widow only a poor cottage and one cow, whereupon she lived, and kept her son at school with the labour of her hands; who being a very towardly youth devised means to help his mother. Wherefore, the fashion being then to wear straw hats, he would dye straw of divers colours, and making extraordinary fine hats, got money, for they lived so poorly that when he went to school he had but a little bean bread and an egg. It happened once that a man who had a good trade of working in jet and amber, seeing the boy, liked him, and took him for to teach him his trade, which he learned soon, being very apt. This master of his being no Catholic, it pleased God by a strong means to convert him, for he saw a book lying on the stool where he used to sit, and looking into it found it was a Catholic book; and reading therein was touched with such remorse that he said to this youth: "Oh! what shall I do? I am damned unless I become a Catholic." His servant needed no persuasion, because he knew what true religion was of his parents. After his master was reconciled, he died, and leaving one son, recommended him to his servant, that he should teach him the said trade as he had taught him. He did so, and took care of him in such wise that by the young boy's work and his own he hired a house and lived pretty well. Then also he set himself in most godly manner to harbour and receive priests and religious men, whereupon he began to be so persecuted that he had scarce any quiet all his life long, but was either in prison or still in danger to go there again when he was out, for he never left receiving of priests. They also provided him of a wife, named Frances Smith, a good Catholic like himself. It happened, when his wife lay in of her first child, the officers of justice, seeing him ever so constant and immovable in his religion, put him into prison, thinking that for the love of his wife and child and for not to be absent from them he would yield. But perceiving he was all one, they thrust him into the dungeon and gave him only the straw whereupon a corpse had lain of one that was dead there a little before, and in the night the rats and mice did so vex him with noise as if the dead man's ghost had been thereabout. Afterwards, when he got himself released from prison, it was always to come again when they pleased. He begged of Almighty God that if ever a priest were taken in his house he might be martyred with him. But God ordained so that never any was taken. Another thing he also purposed, that if our Lord did send him two daughters he would name one Ann and the other Mary, and give them both to God, which indeed happened accordingly. To speak now of his daughter Ann; her mother, his first wife, died when she was ten years old, and afterwards the priests provided her still of places in Catholic gentlemen's houses. Living once with the Lady Ingleby, there was another maid in the house, who had a mind to be a religious, and this wench, together with a man who afterwards became a lay-brother in the Society of Jesus, would still be talking in praise of the religious life, whereupon she got also a great desire thereto, but kept it to herself for seven years, because she knew not how to attain it, yet she hoped in God that He would ordain some means, and hearing a story of one that desired to be a religious, and not knowing how to obtain such a good, fasted every Saturday in honour of our Blessed Lady that she would help her, and at length had her desire fulfilled by a means that was miraculous and would be too long to recite here; she now also fasted on Saturdays for the same end. And our Lady assisted her likewise, for the Lady Babthorpe, of whom we shall speak at length hereafter, sent into Yorkshire for the forementioned maid who desired to be a religious, to come over to her that she might help her into some monastery. But to see the inconstancy of minds if they be not assisted by God: she who before talked so much of it, had now no mind to it at all, wherefore this our Ann, dwelling then with the Lady Palmes, daughter to Lady Babthorpe, discovered her mind to her ghostly Father, who sent her in the other's place, and so she came and served that lady in this town about a year, and desired her lady that she would speak that she might enter here for a lay-sister, and humbly desired to be always kept within doors. So she was admitted, and her time of probation being past, we liked her well, and she made her profession upon St Ursula's day, at the age of twenty-seven years.

The same year, 1618, upon the 11th of November, were professed together two nuns; Sister Dorothy Lawson, daughter to Roger Lawson of Bourch (Brough) in Yorkshire, Esquire, who, living some time a schismatic, was reconciled a good time before his death, and died happily. He enjoyed not his estate, by reason that his father, a knight, lived longer than he. So this his daughter, Dorothy, was bestowed (provided for) by her grandmother, her mother's mother, the Lady Constable, sister to the Duchess of Feria that married the Duke of Feria in Queen Mary's time, and went with him into Spain. The Lady Constable, seeing her daughter Lawson to have many children, was willing herself to bestow some one of them to religion; therefore asking this, her grandchild, if she had any mind thereto and she answering that she had, they procured means to send her over into St Augustine's Order, because that her father was very devout unto this Saint, and at his death desired one of his children might be of his Order; so she was admitted at the age of sixteen, and made her profession about eighteen years old.

Sister Susan Brooke was daughter to Robert Brooke, of good house but a younger brother, the last of ten or twelve children, wherefore, being a courtier and no Catholic, he sought to raise his fortune by some rich marriage, and marking that Alderman Prannel (of London) had but two daughters, which were the heirs of all this great wealth, he resolved to see if he could get the goodwill of the eldest. Of whom, being yet a child in the cradle when he came to the house, he said that perhaps that child should be his wife. When, therefore, she was come to fit years he won her consent by means of the servants, feeing them well to procure her liking towards him, which indeed they did, so that she married him secretly without the consent of her parents, who, when they understood of it, were much disgusted against her, and she perceiving it, took such grief that she miscarried of her first child. She seemed dead, until one of the physicians recovered her, the rest laughing at him saying that he wished to bring life unto a dead stock. Notwithstanding it was God's will and He indeed helped her, which was happier for her soul, she being then no Catholic. She recovered so well that she had twenty children, and before the birth of her fifth, it pleased the Divine goodness to bring her into the Catholic religion after a miraculous manner.

Sitting up once upon a pallet while the maid was making the bed, and her own sister in the room, who would needs help the maid to stir the bed (which it seems God ordained that there might be two witnesses of this), she helping the wench, as is said; after the bed was well beaten and stirred and the bolster laid, her sister went down for some occasion, whereupon Mrs Brooke finding herself pretty well, drew near the bed to help her maid, and taking up the bolster to lay the sheet over it, she found a book lying under the bolster. Whereupon wondering much, she asked of the wench, as also of her sister when she came up, if they had laid it there; who both affirmed they had not, neither had seen any book there a little before, when they laid on the bolster. She then looked into the book, and found that it was a Catholic one, whereof she was very glad, for she had a long time desired to know something of that religion, hearing so much talk of Papists and Recusants, and longed to understand the manner of their observances, but could never have her desire satisfied herein until now that Almighty God provided her of means, for in this book, which it seems was of controversy, she found all heretical objections so clearly confuted, and Catholic religion so manifestly proved in all points, that she fully resolved to become a Catholic, seeing it was the true faith, and no other means to be saved but by it. After this she sought acquaintance with Catholics, so came to be reconciled, and got her husband's goodwill that she might live according to her conscience, as also prevailed so far with him, that he permitted her to bring up all her daughters accordingly, but the sons he would have of his bringing up. She suffered once molestation with her own father, who would fain have had her husband to compel her to go to church, but yet himself was reconciled half a year before he died. It happened after her father's death, that her mother brought her into a room where she showed her so long a table as ten or twelve persons might sit on one side of it, all which was set with plate of silver and golden goblets, cups, salt-cellars, dishes, and other things, as also between the same were laid many silver spoons, and she said to her: "See, daughter, all these shall be thine, and thy sister's;" who with amazement blessed herself secretly, and desired God to deliver her from delighting in it, for she thought it was a great temptation. This prayer it seems was well heard, for from that time off she never saw any more of the plate, and she never had any piece thereof. Once at Whitsuntide, those of her house looking forth, espied in the air a fine white cross, like unto Charing Cross, made just in that fashion with steps, which hung right over their mistress's chamber, low down from the skies, and continued so for about an hour, until they all had seen it. After that her husband, Mr Brooke, fell extremely sick, and became a Catholic, so this was indeed a white cross to him and a happy one, for he recovered again and remained a Catholic about seven years, even to his death.

It happened once that she had taken physic, and it was antimony, and it seems did not moderate it as she should have done, whereupon it wrought so violently that she was almost brought to death's door, and no physician being near to help, the neighbours were called in. She seeing herself in such a distress, made a promise unto the Saint of that day, although she knew not then what Saint it was, that if by his intercession she recovered out of that danger, she would ever after be devout unto him. No sooner had she made this vow, but her violent working ceased, and she became well in perfect health. Then looking into the Calendar of her book she found that it was St Augustine's day, the glorious Doctor of the Church ; so she ever after bore great devotion unto him. This her daughter Susan, being the tenth child, our Lord ordained should be of his Order by the means which we will now show. She was always from her infancy devout and much given to her prayers ; especially after she came to be of fit years to receive the Blessed Sacrament she gave herself wholly to God, to live in that state which should be most pleasing unto Him and according to His will, whatever it were ; leaving the care unto God to ordain means accordingly. It happened, therefore, that having a sister of hers married unto a rich merchant, one Mr Ivens, and she living with her husband at Brussels, knowing this cloister, because she happened to be here at Sister Winifred Blundell's profession; she liked very well our monastery, esteeming that we were true simple religious, such as spiritual people ought to be. She also had a great mind to place some of her sisters in religious houses, as having so many. Therefore, she sent for this, her sister Susan, to come over to her, thinking that because she was so given to her prayers, she would do well in religion. When this latter came into England she was content to go, although as yet not resolved for religion, but to do God's will; and taking this occasion as ordained by Him, she thought perhaps that when she came over she might get a mind to some religious order. So she came to shipping accompanied only with her sister's maid, and it chanced that they were both taken and sent into prison to Newgate, where she remained with the priests their prisoner almost a whole year, taking it as from the hand of God; which indeed happened well both for her soul and body, by reason that she lived there a virtuous recollected life, and suffered divers molestations for her conscience which would be too long to rehearse here. And also her corporal health was amended, for being, as the doctors say, entered into a dropsy, the best remedy for her was to eat little and drink nothing but some hot thing, as wine or the like, both which she had good occasion to do there in prison, by reason that the fare was so short as that commonly they had at night but two shoulders of mutton among twenty-six persons, and at dinner two legs of mutton, they being all men besides herself and one woman; but what she wanted in meat was amended by the goodness of drink, for the Catholics coming to see the prisoners would often give them wine, so that she drank almost nothing else, because the beer was so bad she could not drink it, which helped her disease. So that at length her friends procured her delivery out of prison, after so long a time as is said.

There happened another occasion, which showed plain that her calling was to religion, therefore she came now the second time and had good speed, bringing also with her a gentlewoman named Frances Kemp, daughter unto a rich widow, that her eldest brother, Sir Robert Brooke, had married, of whom we shall speak more hereafter. This poor woman was sent over by her mother to be placed in some monastery to see if she would get a liking to religious life. So they arrived both at Brussels and lived some weeks there with her sister Ivens, she being still unresolved what Order to choose, for although she would of her own fervour have chosen the straitest Order, as that of the Poor Clares, yet she still left herself to the providence of God, where, at what place, and in what time He should ordain; and it happened that her sister was thinking of placing the foresaid Frances Kemp here at Louvain, although she was not of years to become a religious, by reason that their father dying, had ordained in his will, none of his daughters should have their portion till they were twenty-one years of age. Mr Ivens then came to this town, to get Mistress (Miss) Kemp a place here. Then went she to our Blessed Lady of Sichem and there asked her sister Susan, who also went with her, whether she was content to enter into our cloister, and she would speak for her. She answered that she was indifferent unto any place; therefore let her do as she would, and she would take it for God's will. Mrs Ivens and she coming both back again from Sichem, she spoke to have her sister enter here, and her husband promised to give her a portion for his wife's sake, so we took her in, and she made her profession at the age of twenty-five years.

In the year 1619, the 14th of April, were professed two lay-sisters; the first named Mary Thursby, daughter unto Christopher Thursby of Buckenhal in Essex, no Catholic. This his daughter, Mary, went from him about eleven or twelve years of age to serve her aunt, Mrs Green, who was a Catholic. Yet she lived with her about twelve years before she came into the Church, and then continued to live with her aunt for the space of twenty-four years, after which time she was weary of her service, and therefore desired her father to place her with some other Catholic, for her father loved Catholics, though he were none himself, being so timorous that after his daughter was a Catholic, he durst not lodge her any long time in his own house, but provided her a place with the old Lady Huddlestone. There she stayed not long by reason that the Lady was so fearful that priests came seldom to the house, and she, having been at her aunt's used continually to hear Mass and confer with priests, liked not this dry kind of life. Therefore she spoke unto them to provide her of some other place; whereupon a good priest once asked her if she had no mind to come over and be a religious. She answered, she durst not think thereof, but only desired to continue a true Catholic. He, notwithstanding, hastened her herein, considering that she was weary of service, and said this monastery at Louvain would be a good place for her, whereupon she permitted him to write here in her behalf. But, God knows by what occasion, the letters between him and us miscarried, so that at length, meeting with Mistress Mary Ward, she got a liking to the Jesuitesses' manner of life, and gave Mrs Ward a fair golden cross that was her mother's for a token, desiring her to take care of her; who got her father to assure her portion, which was £300. After this the English gentlewomen Jesuitesses took her to come over with them, but by tempest were driven back. After venturing again, and having been four days upon the sea, they were driven back by a great tempest the second time, and just at the time our Rev. Father Barnes's brother was in England ready to come over within a day or two; who, understanding of her mischance at sea, was content to take her over when he went. So she came over with him, who brought her directly to our monastery, having so speedy a passage this third time, that in one week she passed from London to this house, and was admitted for a lay-sister, although in years, in respect that she, having a nun's portion, they should not require so much labour of her, but to help in things as she was able. She made her profession at the age of forty years.

Sister Elizabeth Wickham was by the mother's side grandchild unto a glorious martyr, Richard Langley, an Esquire in Yorkshire, who having four priests at once found in his house, all notwithstanding escaped the searchers' hands and he alone was apprehended. When he came before the bench, they could not have condemned him to death, by reason that although they suspected those gentlemen which escaped to be priests, yet they could not prove it. Notwithstanding, they took advantage of his fervent words; only because he said that although they had been priests he would have received them, and so maliciously were they bent at that time in Queen Elizabeth's reign, that only for these words they put him to death. Whose daughter, mother to our Elizabeth, threw herself away in marriage upon Martin Wickham, a yeoman, who was no Catholic; wherefore Mistress Langley, her mother's sister, who was living at Antwerp, an old maid, sent for two of her nieces to serve her. Whereupon this Elizabeth came over seas with one sister of hers, being about twelve years old, and lived with her aunt three or four years until she died; who left her at her death £40, if she would be a religious, but she had no mind to it yet. At length, because all told her that if she went into England she was in great danger to become a heretic; she then got some to speak for her to be admitted here a lay-sister, and made her profession with Sister Mary Thursby at the age of eighteen years.

In 1619 were professed two nuns, Sister Perpetua Best and Sister Frances Standford, of which latter we omit to speak here, referring it to their own Chronicle, for she was sent to Bruges when the others went, and made their Prioress. Sister Perpetua Best was sister to Mary Best, of whom we have made some little mention before, being also of the company sent to Bruges, but this her sister stayed here. They were daughters of a Catholic gentleman in Yorkshire, and sending over his daughter Mary, very young, to live in these parts to learn (the) language, she after some years went over again to her father and fetched away her sister, Perpetua, and came over again to be a religious, and her sister having lived some time at Antwerp afterwards entered here.

This same year, 1619, upon 16th of July, died our old friend, Mr Worthington, very happily, whom our Lord did honour at his death, for there appeared plainly in his forehead a red cross, and upon his back and shoulders were to be seen marks of blows, which doubtless betokened those which in his youth he had suffered for the Catholic religion. The red cross also, as we may suppose, signifies how that he had carried the cross of persecution all his life, living for so many years in voluntary banishment for the safety of his conscience. He desired to be buried within our monastery among our sisters, the which was granted him, having been so dear a friend and faithful a helper in the setting up of this house, and therefore lies buried in our cloister near unto his wife's mother, Mrs Allen, who was laid here.

This year, 1619, we enlarged our refectory, taking unto it the great hall adjoining, and made also a cellar under it that it might be raised up to the former refectory.

In the year 1620, on the 3rd of August, was professed Sister Teresa Goulding, daughter unto Edward Goulding of Coutston Basset in Nottinghamshire, and her mother was daughter of Mr Godfrey, the famous Catholic lawyer, unto whom was offered to make him Lord Chief-Justice of England if he would have gone to church, but he refused it, as esteeming more the good of his soul than fading temporal honour, but for all this refusal of his they gave him the freedom of his conscience during his life. So he gained even then a greater good than he forsook.

His daughter, Goulding, died when her children were but young, wherefore this her daughter, named then Bridget, was until the age of eight years brought up with a Catholic woman that lived here and there, sometimes with Protestants, sometimes with Catholics. But at the age of thirteen years, living among heretics, she remembered that she once heard her father say there was but one way to be saved; thereupon she began to be troubled, seeing such difference of religions, and prayed earnestly unto God with tears that if she were not in the right, He would bring her to it. Our Lord heard her prayer, for soon after her grandmother by the father's side, sent for her to come and live with her, who was a Catholic. But yet seeing her so young and wild, she durst not trust her to come unto priests; wherefore our Lord Himself took care of her, and ordained that once, upon the report of pursuivants coming, her father gave her two books to hide, which she supposing to be of religion, was curious to look into, and they being of controversy, she found there those doubts cleared which detained her from being a Catholic; and hereupon spoke to an old blind woman in the house about this matter. She having tried her, and seeing her so much desire to become a Catholic, helped her unto a priest, and so she came into the Church, even before her grandmother knew it.

After this a sister of hers coming over to be a religious, her father, to see if she had any mind thereto, counterfeited a letter from her sister, persuading her unto the like course; which indeed moved her much, but she dissembled it and told her father she had no mind. Yet, notwithstanding, after this reading in books that religion was the happiest state of all others, she was inwardly drawn by God thereunto, but nature repined to undergo the austerity which she apprehended was in that life. Yet at length discoursing unto priests her thoughts, they answered her she had a true calling thereunto. Whereupon it happened that after some time one Mr Landen and his wife, being of their acquaintance, were to come over; so she got her father's goodwill to come with them. And being on this side the seas, she met with the Lady Lovel who was then about to set up the cloister of English Teresians, and had like to have joined with her, but that it was not God's will, for having expected about half a year for that erection, and seeing it not effected, she desired to be here, and was admitted, finding great contentment in this Order. She made her profession now at the age of twenty-one, changing her name to Teresa, for her old devotion to St Teresa, but saw afterwards plainly that God would have her to be of this Order.

The same year, 1620, was professed Ann Mortimer, lay-sister, daughter to George Mortimer, and her mother was cousin to Mr Swithin Wells the martyr, but neither she nor her husband were Catholics, nor their children, except this daughter, Ann, whom at her death she gave unto her sister to take her as her own, which she did, at the age of five years. With this aunt she dwelt so long as she lived, who was a good Catholic, but her husband a heretic and a most fierce man. Her niece was fifteen years before she became a Catholic, and when she first communicated, her aunt gave her to our Blessed Lady, who indeed took care of her, as the event showed. Her uncle being a hasty man, her aunt durst get priests into the house but seldom, so that the young maid was sometimes half a year before she could frequent the Sacraments, and when a priest came to the house, sometimes she had not time nor opportunity to hear Mass, but as she was dressing the meat was called up to communicate, and soon after she had received came down again to the household work. Nevertheless, our Lord assisted her so well in these hard shifts concerning her soul's good, that she lived well and had a desire to be a religious if she could get means. Her uncle, fearing sometimes he should be made to pay for her not going to church, would be so out of tune that she was fain to hide herself in the barn when any trouble was.

Her aunt, being so good, prayed heartily to God for her froward husband, so that at length, like another St Monica, she won him to God. He was reconciled to the Church, and our Lord sent him after that a grievous sickness, which he bore for his sins very patiently, and died happily with great repentance.

Our Ann continued to live with her aunt until she died. She after that desired to come over with Mr Cape, who came to live at St Omer's, and had promised her aunt to bring her over seas and take care of her, but he was so timorous that for fear of danger he durst not bring her over. But Almighty God took it in hand Himself, and moved Mr Cape to have a scruple so to leave her, having been recommended unto him by her aunt, as also wanting himself an English servant at St Omer's, he thought fit to take her. Wherefore having occasion of coming again into England, he got a pass for a maidservant to come over with him, and then went a hundred miles' journey to fetch her, who was very glad to come. But yet she lived some time at St Omer's with him before she entered religion; at length Mr Fortescue obtained her a place in our cloister. So she made her profession at the age of thirty-four years.

In the year 1621 were professed two sisters, the eldest named Bridget Gifford and the younger Ann, daughters to Walter Gifford of Chillington, in Staffordshire, Esquire, whose father was a most constant Catholic, and all his house. Queen Elizabeth coming one time that way in progress, took his house to lodge in, being a very fair one. Wherefore he then removed into another house to give the Court place, but came to visit her Majesty, who used him kindly and called him "Gentle Gifford," yet she was not gone from the house about four miles, but he was sent for to come to London, and there committed to prison for his conscience. It seems someone had spoken against him to the Queen for having so great a house and being a Catholic. Nevertheless, Almighty God assisted him so that he found means to be released again, and, compounding for his conscience, did not lose his land or living. His son was not so constant as he, but condescended to the time awhile, yet maintained a priest in the house and assisted all the Catholics thereabout with spiritual help, and when their beasts were to be seized on for their conscience, all his ground was filled with them, to be saved till the officers departed. His wife and children were Catholics, and himself so in heart; as also at length he was reconciled and liveth at present a good Catholic.

These two daughters of his being come to years, the elder was, by interchange of devout moods and fits of vanity, tried which of both should at last get the mastery of her, and our Lord loved her so dearly, having chosen her for His singular beloved spouse, that she at last broke off violently and heroically with the world and marriage, although she was far ensnared therein. She now resolved to be a religious, as also got her parents' consent thereto, and coming home from London, and from following of vanities and worldly pleasures, she found her sister, Ann, grown very pious and godly; who understanding what she intended, began also to get a mind to religion. But yet she would not disclose her mind then, lest any might think she desired to go for her sister's sake, wherefore she let her sister depart, but agreed with her what to do. In the meantime she asked of their priest whether he thought her vocation was good. He answered her it was right, and that she ought to follow it. Wherefore she disclosed her mind to her father and desired his consent, who answered her short, that she should think well upon it. Afterwards, he coming to London, her sister, Bridget, did as was agreed upon between them, counterfeiting letters to him from her, who yet did not send for her, but said he would speak with her himself; which indeed he did on coming home and had a long speech with this his daughter, saying that if God called her, he would in no wise hinder her, but if there were any other intention in it than purely for God, he liked it not, and gave her very substantial counsel, which showed what goodness was in him.

So then she affirming her intention was right, he gave his consent she should go, as also her mother, although she loved her dearly and wept at her parting. So they sent her to London to her sister, who was to go over with the Ambassador; and to see what God will have shall be, it was a great wonder she was not gone before her arrival, for that very day the Ambassador departed and by a strange chance she was left behind. It seems our Lord would have her stay for her sister. So then, seeing their passage failed, and they had no pass to come over, their brother met them there in good time, who having been in these parts, was content for their sakes to go again. And so they took courage and ventured to go, although they had no pass to save them from danger; but Almighty God ordained of His goodness, that they never came into any trouble, but passed very quietly. Coming to Brussels, Mr Suthcoat (Southcote), a friend of their father's, had written a letter for the eldest to be received at St Benedict's, and it happened that they came just to see a clothing there of Mr Bentley's daughter. Which, when the eldest daughter had seen, she affirmed she would not enter there. The Abbess asked the younger if she would come in her place. She answered simply, yea; but begged not the place. The Abbess then desired her to come again next morning, and said she would take order for her to go to the Spa, because she was sickly. But it was not God's will that she should enter in there, for the next morning it did rain so extremely, that there was no going to the monastery, and about noon her sister was to come here to Louvain, for she would see this place, if it liked (pleased) her. She, therefore, went with her, and they coming here both of them, liked this place so well that there was no going back, but they entered in very willingly and joyfully and made their profession, the eldest about twenty-four years of age and the younger twenty-three.

The same year, 1621, upon the 6th of July, being then Trinity Sunday, was professed Sister Elizabeth Lovel, niece to the Lady Lovel, who lived in these parts with her grandmother, Lady Cross, of whom we omit to speak further, because she was of those that were sent to Bruges, referring it to their own Chronicle.

The same year (1621) were professed two nuns, the one, Lady Babthorpe, widow of Sir Ralph Babthorpe, and the other her own grandchild, Frances Babthorpe, who had lived in the cloister from the age of thirteen years, and now made profession with her grandmother, who came in after her, and they were also clothed together. At whose clothing and profession her own son, Father Ralph Babthorpe of the Society of Jesus, preached, and a daughter was also present, who came here to these solemnities of her mother. But to speak in particular of them both: first, the Lady Babthorpe, now named Sister Grace Babthorpe, was a daughter of William Birnand of Brimmon in Yorkshire, Esquire; her mother, daughter of Sir William Ingleby, whose grandfather by the mother's side, Sir William Mallerie (Mallory) was so zealous and constant a Catholic that when heresy first came into England, and Catholic service was commanded to be put down on such a day, he came to the church, and stood there with his sword drawn to defend that none should come in to abolish religion, saying that he would defend it with his life, and continued for some days, keeping out the officers so long as he could possibly do it. Thus much concerning her great-grandfather. Her mother died at her birth, and had no more children, so that she was heir of all her father's estate, who, although he was a younger brother, yet had gotten together a fair estate. She, therefore, was brought up with her grandmother, the Lady Ingleby, a good Catholic, and married at fifteen years of age (as heirs commonly are married young), unto Sir William Babthorpe's eldest son, they both being in equal degree of ancient knights' houses. This her husband was also afterwards knighted;

named Sir Ralph Babthorpe of Babthorpe, in Yorkshire, some ten miles from the city of York. After their marriage, both being very young, he was sent by his father awhile into the Inns of Court, so that for some years to avoid trouble he went to church, only so little as might be; but she continuing ever a constant Catholic, it happened that Lord Huntingdon came to Yorkshire, being a most rank heretic, and made then President of York, who had promised Queen Elizabeth that he would make all the Papists go to their church, if she would let him alone. Whereupon he was permitted to do what he would, and so began to rage against Catholics like a furious lion; but yet Almighty God made his servants strong enough to cope with him. This President would also compel men's wives to go to church, and therefore sent forth a commandment that all who had Catholic wives should bring them before him against such a day, so as men upon pain of being contemners of the State were forced to bring their wives forth, among whom this worthy woman was one. The Lord President first examined her apart, and asked her when she had gone to church. She answered him, never. He demanded then, how many Masses she had heard. She answered, so many that she could not reckon them. At this he began to stamp. He, lastly, seeing her so constant, made her the next day appear before the whole Council Table at York, where himself and their Bishop were chief, and seeing her to stand firm, they thought to try all means possible. Wherefore she was committed unto a lawyer's house in York, a most hot Puritan, and others also in divers houses, where they brought almost daily ministers and others to persuade her, as also even at table eating with them, she could not be quiet from hearing their blasphemies against the Catholic Faith. Having endured this for a fortnight, seeing they prevailed nothing, the Lord President committed six of the best sort to prison in an old castle of the Queen's, where they were not permitted to come together nor converse with each other, nor yet to have any Catholic servants, but the maids that served them must be seen twice in the week to be present at the heretical service which was said in the castle. Besides that, their living there was very chargeable, for they paid a great deal to the keepers for attendance, as they called it, which was for their continual watch over them not to come into each other's company, and the keeper was a most hot Puritan, as also one of his servants, inflexible, but the other, who was porter, they could move for money.

In this strait prison they continued for almost two years, yea, the President intended never to have released them unless they yielded, sending every now and then ministers to dispute with them. Their names were these: first, the Lady Constable, of whom we have spoken before, being Sister Dorothy Lawson's grandmother; Mrs Babthorpe, Mrs Ingleby, Mrs Mettam, Mrs Lawson; all these gentlewomen became afterwards ladies, their husbands being knighted. They were kept so close in prison that besides their separation from each other they were every night locked up in their chambers, in such wise that if any sudden sickness or other accident had happened they might have died there without help, for they were so far from the keepers that they could not have heard though they called never so loud, and to help one another was not possible, because they were all locked up asunder. Yet, notwithstanding, Almighty God of His goodness preserved them there all the time that they endured this usage for His love. Mrs Lawson, being with child when they took her, the Lord President, fearing she might die in prison in childbirth, and he be blamed of cruelty, determined notwithstanding she should not go home by any means, but thought to have placed her in some heretic's house. Yet his design was crossed herein, for she became so very ill with the stir of her committing to prison, that there was no changing her out of that place, and so she was brought to bed in prison, yet would they not permit the other

Catholic gentlewomen to come unto her except at the time she was in labour, being indeed in great distress and remaining very ill afterwards. The others had then only a little more liberty than ordinary to come unto her. But to go on with our courageous matron. She would not confer with ministers, saying she was sure enough of her faith, for when they be content to confer with them, they take it as though they doubted. Wherefore she wisely said that she came not there to dispute about her faith but to profess it. Then they told her how others would confer (which perhaps they did but to move her to it). She answered that it was nothing to her what others did, because she should answer but for herself. Nevertheless sometimes without show of disputation she would hit the ministers home, and put them to silence in their objections; as once she showed unto one of them plainly how that our religion hath all the signs of the true Church, which theirs hath not, and he not knowing how to disprove it, said he would come again and bring with him in writing how their religion had the true signs, but he never came forth with them, for it was only a copy of his countenance. Here in this place was also prisoner at that time Lady Constable, grandmother to Sister Dorothy Lawson, and although they were kept so strictly from each other, yet, notwithstanding, they had a hundred tricks and devices to cozen the keeper, which would be too long to set down here. Only thus much we cannot omit that once having espied how the Lady Constable and Lady Babthorpe were gotten together, he was in fury at them both, and said he was bound in £400 they should not speak with each other. But our courageous woman replied to him, that he was very simple to bind himself in such a manner, "For," said she, "a man hath enough to do to keep one woman, and would you undertake to keep and rule six women?" He said then he would break the bar of her door, for she had put a bar on the inside, that the keepers should not come into her chamber when they would, and she answered that if he did, she would appeal to be no more under his keeping, "For," said she, "I stand upon my honour to answer to my husband that no man shall have freedom to come into my chamber."

Indeed Lady Babthorpe had good reason to keep them out of her chamber, considering what devices she made for the help of her soul, for, having a maid whom she durst trust, she writ letters in such wise that she got a priest to come to a grate (grated) window of a low room, which looked forth out of the castle into a park, and there she went to confession and communicated, as also sometimes helped the Lady Constable there, but he (the priest) was fain always to come in the night, for by day the keeper often walked thereabout. Yet not content with this, she invented a means how to get the priest in; for, taking a chisel and a hammer, and getting some to play at shuttlecock, that they might not hear her at such time as she cut the freestone of the window on the inside, where the bars of the grate went in, so long time till she could take in the whole window, she let in the priest; and when he was gone she put up the grate again and nothing was seen on the outside. She might well have broken prison herself, but she thought she should be then sent again; therefore she took it for the best way to make rather her present profit thereof, for by this means she could keep a priest a whole day within, and assisted also the others with spiritual help. But to omit other good shifts, at last their husbands got them released, being kept so close that even they themselves might not come to see their wives without either the Lord President's or the Bishop's hand with two others. Wherefore they procured some ladies of the Court to tell the Queen how a lady and other gentlewomen were shut up in an old castle; child-bearing women that had house and family to govern; who humbly besought her Majesty for freedom. By this means they obtained a grant for their release signed with six of the Privy Council's hands. But here came yet another ill chance, if Almighty

God had not assisted anew, for the man that was sent down with this licence had himself a suit before the said Lord President; wherefore not daring to disgust him anyway, went and let him understand of all this, and gave him time to cross it; who presently taking it for a disgrace that they should be freed without his consent, sent up to London to have this grant disannulled, but could not prevail. For the ladies, who had been bribed, stood hard to have them released; wherefore it was agreed that he should have the title of doing it, and so they were to be let forth as by his permission, although it was full sore against his will; who for all that ordained they should upon ten days' warning be ready to go again to prison when he should please, and in this manner set them free. Yet, notwithstanding, all the rest being got loose, our courageous woman (Lady Babthorpe) was still detained because of her great zeal, and for that she would not permit a little daughter of hers, who lived with her in prison, to go unto their service or prayers, and also her maids had still some excuse or other not to be present; because indeed she commonly had such a maid there as was well minded, so that she could trust her in the foresaid shifts of her contrivance. But now to go on; seeing that she alone was kept still in prison, her husband sued for her, and desired that since their fault was alike, she might not be used worse than the rest. Whereupon she was made to come before the Bishop, and her husband desired her to give him good words that she might get freedom, which she promised to do, and indeed called the Bishop when she spake to him, "Lordship," much against her will. He, having rated her for awhile for her constancy, bade her at length go away, saying he would tell her husband what should become of her, for she deserved not to know, and so released her, having stayed a fortnight longer than the others. After this she should have gone to prison again once or twice, but that she was still with child and so escaped. A good time after these turmoils, when her eldest son was married, she got her husband to become a good Catholic, inducing him first by a book which showed plainly how there was no salvation out of the Catholic Church, and then the Resolution adjoined to this. By the reading of which two books he fully resolved to become a Catholic, and was reconciled to the Church before Queen Elizabeth died.

Afterwards when King James came in, there was great hope that he would be good to Catholics, wherefore many did give up their names to him when he demanded it, among whom Sir Ralph Babthorpe did the same, and thereupon began also to taste the cup of persecution, as well as his wife had done long before. For when he once had professed the Catholic religion, there was no more living for him at home, but he was fain to go into Lincolnshire, where his son was married, and if sometimes he came home, he should find bills set upon his door to summon him to appear, and then was fain to depart again in haste. When they saw this way prevailed not to catch him, they would read the said bill of warrant openly in the church, and money was offered unto whosoever could take him and bring him before them. So that always someone of the house was fain to go and swear he was not at home, and therefore could not incur any penalty by the said warrant. Wherefore if he chanced at any time to come home for one night, he was forced in the morning betimes to get away, that the foresaid persons who were to take the oath might swear truly; and once, when the great frost was in King James's days, he was in danger of drowning upon the way, being on a great river which is to pass between these two mentioned shires, but our Lord preserved him to merit more. Being, therefore, thus continually molested, they determined to leave their house in Yorkshire, and so came both to live in London, where also they narrowly escaped a great trouble. For one morning betimes, came two pursuivants into their lodging, Sir Ralph not being at home, and said they came to hear Mass with them; which, so soon as the Lady Babthorpe heard, she bade her maid to shut the door, for she had a priest at the time there, who would have hidden himself; but she said it would be worse if they found him out, for then they should know that he was a priest. Therefore she wished him to remain with her publicly, and let her find an excuse. So, in they came, and she said that the priest was her servant and affirmed they would do her an ill turn if they took him away, for he was going to the doctor for her daughter, who indeed was then sick.

They would not believe her, but had him away with them, which she perceiving, got one man who was a good shifter in such cases, to see if he could wring the priest by some trick from the pursuivants. He went and met with them, had them away with him to the tavern, and used the matter so, that he got means for the priest to escape out of their hands, and thus our Lord delivered them from that great danger. Afterwards they began to come into trouble about the oath of allegiance, for all the Catholics of the shire were summoned to appear within such a time to take the said oath. Upon this, Sir Ralph, determined to come over seas that he might end his days quietly here.

So he procured a licence without date to come over unto the Spa for his health, having indeed had a great fit of sickness some time before, and the doctors affirmed that it was needful for his health to come over; so he came thus with his wife and they brought with them their eldest son's daughter, of whom we shall soon speak more, whom she left at St Omer's and came herself to live in this town in the year 1613. Here she remained with her husband, Sir Ralph, till at length she had occasion to go into England to look after their temporal means; and in the meantime Sir Ralph Babthorpe died very blessedly in this town at a happy time, being taken sick the last day that he came out of the spiritual exercises, and it seems our Lord thereby prepared him for the next life. When, therefore, this worthy lady heard in England of her husband's death, she presently determined to put her design in execution, remembering that from her young days she found in herself that once she must do something for God, which in later years she plainly felt was to enter religion, and, therefore, if her husband would have consented she had done it in his lifetime, but he being sickly could not well spare her kind looking to him.

Wherefore now she made no more ado, and provided herself of temporal means for this purpose. But she passed no small difficulties to bring the same unto effect, for her friends and priests would fain have persuaded her to stay still in the world, as thinking she might do much good there, yet she stood so constant that her vocation was to religion, as that at length all were fain to yield. Wherefore having gathered together sufficient means, she came over seas again unto this town, and desired very earnestly to enter in with us, bringing also with her a young grandchild of hers, named Grace Constable, of whom we shall speak more in due place. So then, we receiving her, she was professed, being of the age of about fifty years, having had nine children, one of whom was a priest and Benedictine, who suffered imprisonment and other troubles, and two other younger priests of the Society of Jesus. Two daughters of hers were married in England, some of whose children came to religion, and her daughter, Barbara, had been at St Benedict's at Brussels, but could not go forward for a defect in her throat, so she lived afterwards among the Jesuitesses.

Thus did this worthy woman, who had so constantly served God all her life, give herself in her old days wholly unto God, taking Him for her spouse, whom she had desired so long before, and was to her now, *Electus ex Millibus*, chosen out most wisely above thousands, having also the joy to see her beloved husband so happily to end his days, and go before her to that glory whereunto she after desired to arrive with the greatest perfection she could; seeking to please God by the blessed state of obedience, holy poverty, and continency. But to speak also of her grandchild, Sister Frances Babthorpe: she was the daughter of Sir William Babthorpe, Sir Ralph's eldest son, a most constant Catholic, who also suffered very much for his faith, and even when he was a boy sent to school, could never be induced to go to church, though he were ever so much urged thereunto. Coming to years, he married the daughter of William Tirret (Tyrwhitt) of Kettelby, in Lincolnshire, Esquire, who was so devout a Catholic that when his father, Sir Robert Tirrett, died, who had began to build a fair house upon ground that was abbey land, he made that which was begun of the building to be left unfinished, saying he would leave it against a Catholic time, that religious might again live therein, and make the building a monastery. But to return to Sir William Babthorpe.

He came at length into great trouble for his zeal in defence of religion by reason that having two priests found in his house, he would have agreed with the pursuivants for money to let them go, but when he saw that by no fair means they would do it, he determined by force to rescue them out of their hands. Wherefore, being a tall strong man, he made no more ado, but drew out his sword, and made the priests to depart away, keeping the pursuivants the while in such fear with his naked sword, that none of them durst to resist him. But afterwards they complained to the Justice, and it was esteemed a great contempt so to resist these vile officers; wherefore he was fined to pay such a sum of money as brought him to great poverty, besides imprisonment almost a whole year. So he was fain to come over seas, and lived here a long time only in the place of a common soldier, enduring the want and miseries of such a needy life, until, at length, Almighty God respected the humility of His servant, and ordained that he got a captain's place. Divers of his children have entered in to religion, of whom this his daughter, Frances, was the eldest, who came over with her grandmother, being a child, and lived at St

Omer's with the Jesuitesses ; until, being very sickly there, and also not liking their kind of life, her grandmother sent for her to live with her in this town. Who, so soon as she saw our monastery, had such a desire to enter in, that her grandmother could have no rest with her unless she placed her here. So that we seeing her so earnestly to desire it, although she was very young, admitted her till she should be of fit age to be clothed. Wherefore after that, her grandmother entering here upon the decease of her husband, they were both professed together, showing the wonderful work of God in joining one so aged with one so young, to serve Him in holy religion (for she was but seventeen), so that *senes cum junioribus*, young and old together, we do praise our Lord.

PREFACE TO CHAPTER THE SIXTH

The Cloptons and Shakespeare's Country. Baron Carew of Clopton. The ancient homes of the Fortescues in South Devon. Blessed Adrian Fortescue and his descendants. The Plowdens of Plowden. Edmund Plowden. The Constables of Flamborough and Everingham. The Lords Herries. Abbess Constable, O.S.B. In the Church of Everingham, 15th February 1904.

"There is a fine old house about a mile from Stratford-on-Avon, Clopton, which in Shakespeare's time belonged to the powerful Warwickshire and Suffolk family of the same name, and with its deep brown-tiled roofs, lies low against the gentle slopes of Welcombe and Snitterfield. Under the carved stone arch of a fine old doorway Shakespeare must have walked many a time with his friend, John Coombe, who lived just over the brow of the hill at Welcombe, and whose daughter married a Clopton. The house, built round a narrow court, is full of queer corridors, up-and-down steps, secret passages, and hiding-places. At the top of one narrow staircase is a curious old Catholic chapel in the roof, now turned into a bedroom.

"In 1605 the house was tenanted by Ambrose Rookwood, one of the Gunpowder Plot conspirators, and when he was arrested at Holbeach, his effects at Clopton were seized. A copy of the list of goods, now in the Shakespeare Museum at Stratford, describes silver-gilt chalices, crucifixes, crosses of glass, vestments of white tissue, as the goods of Ambrose Rookwood, lately attainted of high treason.

"Clopton garden is a delightful place, with its smooth lawns, its splendid trees, its shrubberies that shelter hundreds of singing-birds, its shady ponds, and above all, its wallflowers. The air is laden with their scent. From the top of the Welcombe Hill, behind Clopton House, the view is a typical one of this placid old-world bit of England. That Shakespeare loved this spot is one of the few things that are known certainly about him. Many a time he must have wandered up the path from Stratford, and looked over the peaceful vale. More than likely as a boy he bird-nested in the Welcombe woods, and listened to the nightingales, as he walked over to Ingon meadow, his father's farm. In 1614 he successfully resisted the enclosing of Welcombe."—*Shakespeare's Country*, by Rose Kingsley; *English Illustrated Magazine*, February 1885. Abridged.

At Clopton, rightly called by our chronicler the chief house of the family, were born, probably about the same date as Shakespeare himself, Joyce and Anne, daughters and co-heiresses of William Clopton. Both were brought up Protestants. Joyce married the celebrated Sir George Carew, son of George Carew, a Protestant clergyman, of the Carews of Mohun's Ottery in Devon, in which county Sir George was born, probably at Exeter. He was made by Elizabeth, Lord President of Munster; by James I., Baron Carew of Clopton; and by Charles I., Earl of Totnes, and is buried in the parish church of Stratford-on-Avon. Of his barbarous ferocity in Ireland, even Walsingham was forced to express his horror and detestation.

Anne married her cousin, William Clopton of Sledwick in Durham. Our Chronicle tells much of their sufferings after their conversion to the faith. In February 1604, William Clopton surrendered the receivership of the Bishopric of Durham and other places, and in 1607 "the benefit of the recusancy of William Clopton" was made over to Robert Walker and Richard Brass. They had to drink the cup of suffering to the dregs, and were amply rewarded in their descendants. Their son, Cuthbert, entered the Society of Jesus, and, while acting as chaplain to the Venetian Ambassador in 1641, was arrested and sentenced to death for the faith, but saved through the ambassador's intercession; four daughters were professed together at St Monica's; and a fifth, Ursula, by her second marrage with Henry Neville of Holt in Leicestershire, became the mother of Dame Anne, Benedictine nun at Pontoise. She had also three granddaughters among the Canonesses at Bruges.

Many memorials of the ancient house of Clopton are to be found at Long Melford in Suffolk, the earliest home of the family, where they held the manor of Kentwell, and were distinguished for piety and generosity to the Church. Peter de Clopton was Prior of St Edmundsbury in the beginning of the fourteenth century; Walter de Clopton was, in 1395, Chief-Justice of England; and John Clopton, an ardent Lancastrian, made his escape when the Earl of Oxford and his other fellow-prisoners were beheaded on the 22nd of February 1461. Kentwell Hall is distant about a mile from Melford Church, which is a memorial of the munificent piety of the Cloptons, especially of that John Clopton who so nearly lost his life for the House of Lancaster. The holy-water stoup, credence table, and sedilia still remain in the Clopton chantry. Outside the Lady Chapel may still be read the inscription asking prayers for the souls of John, William, Alice, and Margery Clopton, "and for all the souls that the said John is bound to pray for." Father Bridgett has recorded from J. P. Neale's *Views of Interesting Churches* an account by Roger Marton, who died in 1580, of the Palm Sunday Procession at Long Melford Church as he had witnessed it: "Upon Palm Sunday, the Blessed Sacrament was carried in Procession about the churchyard under a fair canopy borne by four yeomen. The Procession coming to the church gate went westward, and they with the Blessed Sacrament went eastward; and when the Procession came against the door of Mr Clopton's aisle, they, with the

Blessed Sacrament, with a little bell and singing approached at the east end of our Lady's Chapel; at which time a boy with a thing in his hand pointed to it, signifying a prophet, as I think, and sang, standing up on the turret that is upon the said Mr Clopton's aisle door: *Ecce rex tuus venit*, etc. And then all did kneel down, and then, rising up went singing together into the church, and coming near the porch, a boy or one of the clerks did cast over among the boys flowers and singing cakes."

The Cloptons—the name used often to be spelt Clapton—both in Warwickshire and Suffolk, have long passed away, but the associations connected with them will not easily let their memory perish. Sir William Clopton of Kentwell left an only child, Anne, married to Sir Symonds d'Ewes. Their daughter, Cecilia, married Sir Thomas Darcy, Bart., and when Lady Darcy died without issue in 1661, "the Cloptons' race was run."

For about a century longer, Cloptons were to be found at Stratford. Sir Hugh Clopton, barrister, knighted by George I., welcomed Garrick and his friends to Shakespeare's *New Place* in May 1742. This house, built by Sir Hugh Clopton, Lord Mayor of London in the reign of Henry VII., had been purchased by Shakespeare and remained in possession of the poet's descendants till repurchased by the family after the Restoration. But when the second Sir Hugh died in 1751, it was sold to the Rev. Mr Gastrell, who pulled it down and sold the materials.

Our chronicler next gives a striking story of the Godwins of Wells, but without indicating the maiden name of Sister Godwin's mother, the wife of James Godwin. Her baptismal name was Matilda, and Mr Gillow, in his notice of Father James Godwin, or Goodwin, brother to our Canoness, suggests that she was a Middlemore. Father Godwin laboured in the Exeter diocese from 1631 to 1651. There was formerly a charity in Wells called "James Godwin's gift." Thomas Godwin and his son Francis, Protestant bishops respectively of Wells and Hereford, were undoubtedly of the same family.

In that part of South Devon which lies between the Yealm and the Dart, is an old farmhouse, within the parish of Modbury, which was once the family mansion and earliest English home of the illustrious house of Fortescue, and bore the name of Wimpstone. Between Totnes and Kingsbridge the Fortescues had several seats, and memorials of the Fortescues may still be seen in the church of Loddiswell, and elsewhere in that beautiful part of England's fairest county. These have passed into other hands, but Earl Fortescue still represents the ancient house at his noble mansion of Castle Hill in North Devon.

For us, the brightest glories of the house of Fortescue are those which arise from the many and heroic examples which it gave of Catholic faith and loyalty from the day when Blessed Adrian Fortescue sealed his faith with his blood. During several generations, daughters of the house of Fortescue wore the Canoness's white robe in our community, and so I propose to give in this chapter a few brief notices on one branch of this illustrious family, the Fortescues of Salden in Buckinghamshire. One word on the earlier line will suffice. Richard le Fortescu, or "strong shield," who is handed down in the family tradition as having saved the Conqueror's life at Hastings, returned to Normandy, but his eldest son, Sir Adam, the ancestor of the English Fortescues, obtained a grant of Wimpstone in the parish of Modbury, a few miles south-west of Totnes, and between the two Devonshire rivers aforesaid, the Dart and the Yealm, there were Fortescues at Preston, Spindlestone, Wood, Norreis, and Fallapit. The family pedigree gives us twelve lords of Wimpstone, whereof six bore the name of Adam, till, at the close of the fourteenth century, Sir John, a younger son of Sir William Fortescue of Wimpstone, gives a wider celebrity to the Fortescues of South Devon. Sir John of Meaux, as he is called, fought at Agincourt, and was made Governor of Meaux after its capture by the English in 1422. He married Eleanor Norreis of Norreis, not far from Wimpstone. Their eldest son, Sir Henry, was Chief-Justice of Ireland, and brought back with him to his Devonshire home a large body of Irish retainers, whose descendants, no doubt, are still there: their second, Sir John, was the renowned Chief-Justice of England, and the direct ancestor of Earl Fortescue of Castle Hill: the third son, Sir Richard, who fell at the first battle of St Alban's, usually called Sir Richard Fortescue of Punsborne, was the grandfather of Blessed Adrian Fortescue, and the ancestor of several of our Louvain nuns. His second son, Sir John, married Alice Boleyn, sister of Thomas, Earl of Wiltshire, the father of the unhappy Queen Anne Boleyn, who was thus the martyr's first cousin. Willingly would we linger on Blessed Adrian, but we are now concerned with his descendants among the Sisters of St Monica's.

Sir Adrian Fortescue was beheaded on Tower Hill on the 9th of July (according to some authorities on the 10th) in 1539, three years after his hapless cousin had suffered the same death (but for a far different cause) in the same place. He had been twice married, first to Anne, daughter of Sir William Stonor, and secondly to Anne, daughter of Sir William Reade. With his children by the first wife we are not concerned. His widow was in high favour with Queen Mary, and after the martyr's death married Sir John Parry, through whom the manor of Salden, Bucks, came into the family. The martyr's eldest son, John, was unhappily educated a Protestant, and was Preceptor to Queen Elizabeth, Keeper of the Wardrobe, and Chancellor of the Exchequer. But among his descendants I find many names distinguished for their faith and piety, of whom not a few consecrated themselves to God by the vows of religion. The martyr's grandson, Sir Francis Fortescue of Salden (Sir John's third son), next claims our attention. Whether he died reconciled to the Church is uncertain, for as Father Gerard wrote, "he presumed too much on an opportunity of doing penance before death." The insertion of his name in the Louvain Dirge-book is a strong presumption in his favour.

In his house Father Gerard and other priests lived in safety, preaching and saying Mass, "for the mistress was a devout Catholic and the master no enemy to religion." Sir Francis was a Knight of the Bath and in favour at Court. His wife, Grace Manners, who according to one of my authorities was the daughter, according to another the niece, of the Earl of Rutland, was a convert of Father Gerard's, and by her influence their children were brought up Catholics. One of these was Sister Frances Fortescue, professed at Louvain in 1622; another, Adrian, entered the Society of Jesus. Among the grandchildren of Sir Francis, Frances and Grace became Benedictine nuns at Ghent, and in the next generation his great-granddaughter, Elizabeth Fortescue, was professed in our community as Sister Clementia in 1680. One of her sisters was Dame Mary Fortescue, O.S.B., of Dunkirk; another, Anne, lived and died in our community, without taking vows, and the family name often recurs in the Benefactors' Book. Concerning Grace Manners, Lady Fortescue of Salden, occurs in the Calender of State Papers one of those entries that recall so touchingly the sufferings of our forefathers. It is a petition to the King from George, Earl of Shrewsbury and others in these terms: "Dame Grace Fortescue demised the manor of Salden, Bucks, to the petitioners for payment of the debts of her late husband, Sir Francis Fortescue, *and after became a recusant convict.* Pray the King to confirm the afore-mentioned demise."

Let us now return to Blessed Adrian. Through his third son, Sir Anthony, God added still more to His crown by the piety of his descendants. Sir Anthony's wife was Margaret, the granddaughter of Blessed Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury and daughter of Geoffrey Pole, the Cardinal's brother. Their second son, John Fortescue, is

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described in the MS. before me as "of no great estate but of ancient family," whose house was a receptacle for all priests and religious without partiality or exception." He married Helen, daughter of Ralph Henslow, of whom our Louvain Records tell us that "she was near of kin to the Earl of Southampton and a most constant Catholic. Topcliffe could not abide her, because she played him so many pretty tricks in shifting away the priests out of his fingers." This holy couple came over to end their days in Flanders. Their daughter, Mary, made her profession at St Monica's on the same day as Sister Gertrude Winter.

From a MS. belonging to our community we learn that there was a fourth and last baronet, Sir Francis, son of Sir Edward by his second wife, Mary Reresby. He was Sister Clement's brother. Another of our MSS. adds concerning Sister Mary's father, Mr John Fortescue, that "he lived upon an office which Sir John Fortescue, a member of the Privy Council, provided him of"; that in term time Masses were said all the morning in his house, and that his wife, a niece of Cardinal Pole, always kept the pursuivants at bay till the priests were hidden.

With regret I am compelled to leave to a subsequent volume our notices of Blessed Margaret Pole's family, the Bedingfields, and others, whose names will occur again in the *Chronicle*. This first series of prefaces may well be closed by an account of the Plowdens and Constables. Sisters Constable and Plowden had already arrived at St Monica's in 1624.

Plowden Hall (formerly spelt also Ployden, Playden, etc.), as it is at present, remains in great measure, especially in the interior, as it was rebuilt by Edmund Plowden in Elizabeth's reign; with small panelled and tapestried dwelling-rooms, abounding in nooks and corners, with cleverly devised priests' hiding-holes. It is built in a wooded hollow, within the parish of Lydbury North, in the hundred of Purslow, county of Salop. Here Plowdens have lived and died ever since the time when the Crusader, Sir Roger de Plowden, in the year 1190, built the small Lady Chapel still attached to Lydbury Parish Church, in thanksgiving for his safe return from the siege of Acre. The Plowden Chapel is in the north transept.

The tenth in descent from the crusader was Edmund Plowden, the renowned lawyer. His parents were Humphrey and Elizabeth Plowden, his mother being the daughter of John Sturry; her first husband was William Woollascot. Edmund, born in 1517, studied at Cambridge and afterwards at Oxford. He was at first a physician, but forsook medicine for the law, and according to Sergeant Woolrych, "the Middle Temple claims the great lawyer. He was entered of that Inn in 1538." None of his profession have won higher encomiums from his contemporaries, both for legal knowledge and integrity of life. Camden writes of him: "Great was the capacity and good the inclination of this man; large the furniture and happy the culture of his soul; grave his mien and stately his behaviour; well regulated his affections and allayed his passions; well principled his mind and well set his spirit: solid his observation, working and practical his judgment." He married Katherine, daughter of William Sheldon of Beoly in Worcestershire. Francis, his third son, was the father of our Sister Margaret Plowden.

The greatest glory of Edmund Plowden was his inflexible fidelity to his religion. A letter from Queen Elizabeth to the great lawyer, now unhappily lost, was formerly at Plowden Hall, in which the Queen offered to make him Chancellor if he would abandon his faith. But a copy of his answer is preserved, in these terms:—

"Hold me, dread Sovereign, excused. Your Majesty well knows I find no reason to swerve from the Catholic faith, in which you and I were brought up. I can never countenance the persecution of its professors. I should not have in charge your Majesty's conscience one week before I should incur your displeasure, if it be your Majesty's royal intent to continue the system of persecuting the retainers of the Catholic faith." But he did not lose Elizabeth's respect. In 1562 he was one of the Council of the Duchy of Lancaster. In Mary's reign he had firmly opposed the death sentences on Protestants for cause of religion, seceding bodily from Parliament at the risk of fine and imprisonment when he could not prevail.

But for a distinguished Catholic to escape altogether from persecution was very difficult in that age. Bishop Bonner was a prisoner in the Marshalsea for his religion, when Horne, the Anglican Bishop of Winchester, ordered the oath of supremacy to be tendered to him, and Bonner was indicted for refusing. Plowden at once denied that Horne was a Bishop and required that the question might be submitted to a jury. This was granted by the judges of the court, but such was the terror of the Anglican prelates, lest their ordination should be called in question, that matters were not allowed to proceed further.

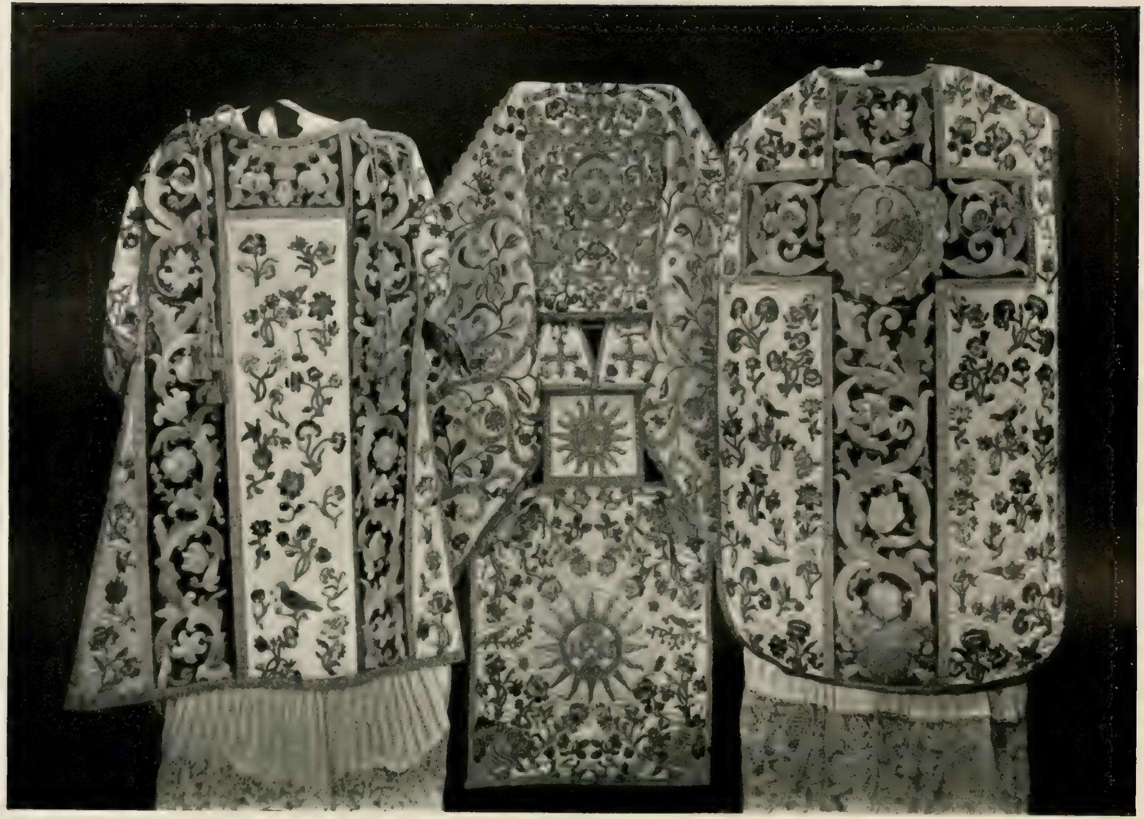
Plowden's refusal to admit the royal supremacy caused him to be compelled to give a bond to appear before the Privy Council whenever summoned. In rebuilding Plowden he was careful to make provision of priests' hiding-places, and I may give here another passage from the volume before me. "It is related that Edmund Plowden once came within danger of the law. One day some evil-disposed persons told him that Mass was about to be celebrated in a certain house in the neighbourhood in case he might wish to assist thereat. Edmund accepted the invitation, attended the service, and was seen to make the sign of the Cross and use his prayer-book. Shortly afterwards, he was summoned and tried for the offence, but being suspicious of foul play somewhere or other, he cross-examined the witnesses, and amongst others the supposed priest who had officiated. He demanded of this man whether he would swear to being a priest, and upon his answering in the negative, 'Then,' quoth Plowden, 'the case is altered; no priest, no Mass; no Mass, no violation of the law.' 'The case is altered, quoth Plowden,' became a common proverb."

We find him repeatedly fined for cause of religion, and on 2nd December 1580, articles in matters of religion against him were exhibited to the Privy Council, the spirit whereof may be understood from a brief extract: "He came to church until the Bull came that Felton was executed for, and the northern rebels rose upon, and after that he utterly refused both services, sacraments, and every other means to communicate with the church. . . . He hath openly and reproachfully, King Henry the Eighth being commended for rooting out the Pope and his power, called him a great slouch, and said he was like a bull in a common, and that Justice Montague was his butcher, to execute whom he would."

The Plowden Hall Records have much to say of the great lawyer's intimate relations with that noble confessor of the faith, Sir Francis Englefield, whose estates in Shropshire he managed, and whose nephew was his ward, to whom he made a gift of his wardship. This Mr Englefield proved ungrateful, and broke his promise of allowing Humphrey Sandford, Plowden's nephew, a lease of his land. This harshness caused the death of Richard Sandford, Humphrey's father, who died at Plowden.

Sergeant Plowden died 6th February 1584, at the age of sixty-seven. Edmund, his eldest son, died unmarried, two years after his father. Humphrey, the second, had died in infancy, and the third son, Francis, mentioned in our Chronicle, succeeded his brother. By his marriage with Mary, sister of Sir Richard Fermor of Somerton in Oxfordshire, he had twelve children, of whom Margaret, the youngest, took the white habit of our Canonesses. "Francis Plowden," say the Plowden MSS., "was fearfully persecuted, his house sacked, his estates confiscated," for his invincible attachment to the Catholic Faith. He lived partly at Plowden, partly at Shiplake in Oxfordshire, in a house that no longer exists, and where he died on 11th December 1652, at the great age of ninety.

Edmund Plowden (2) the brother of our Sister, obtained



SEVENTEENTH CENTURY VESTMENTS.

A Gift to St Mary's by the Plowden Family. Now at St Augustine's Pri from Charles I. a grant of the territory of "New Albion" in America, as a county palatine, where he lived for six years. After the Restoration, Charles II. conferred the province on his brother, James, afterwards James II. Father Thomas Plowden, Sir Edmund's brother, *alias* Salisbury, is the first of ten members of the family whose biographies are given by Brother Foley, and were professed in the Society of Jesus, of whom several were amongst the most illustrious of the English Province. Sir Edmund's life was much saddened by litigation with his son, Francis, whom he disinherited.

Francis Plowden, Sister Margaret's eldest brother, succeeded to the Shropshire estates. He was twice married; first to Elizabeth, daughter of Alban Butler of Aston-le-Wells in Northamptonshire; secondly, to Katharine, widow of Richard Butler of Callan, Co. Kilkenny, in Ireland. To the family of his first wife belonged the Rev. Alban Butler, author of the *Lives of the Saints*. One of his daughters by the second marriage was Sister Marina Plowden, for twenty-five years Prioress of our community of St Monica's. "In the Convent of Newton Abbot, South Devon, are a handsome chasuble and three antependiums, richly embroidered in silk and gold. On the former of these is worked the Plowden arms on a raised ground, and one of the most aged of the community well recollects the embroidering to have been originally grounded on cloth of silver, and afterwards transferred." So wrote in 1871 the compiler of the Plowden MSS.

The holy life of Mother Marina, the lawyer's great-granddaughter, who was for twenty-five years Prioress of St Monica's, is related at unusual length by the chronicler in its own place. The edifying lives of those Plowdens who entered the Society of Jesus have been inserted in Brother Foley's *Records*, and I have only space at my disposal for a few disconnected gleanings from the family annals, but which will not be without interest to our readers.

Among the gallant cavaliers who surrendered to Fairfax when Oxford was taken by the army of the Parliament in 1646, and were allowed to pass out with their servants and horses, one was Francis Plowden, Sister Marina's father. When he died in 1661, Katharine, his widow, crossed the sea and joined her daughter, Dame Ursula Butler, in the Benedictine Abbey at Ghent. Six years later she made her profession there under the name of Dame Scholastica, in the sixtieth year of her age. Her stepson, Edmund, succeeded his father at Plowden. By his wife, Elizabeth Cotton, he had seven children, whereof the two youngest became Jesuits. His eldest son, Edmund, succeeded him; his second, Francis, took to wife Mary Stafford Howard, granddaughter of the venerable martyr, William, Viscount Stafford, beheaded on Tower Hill, on the Feast of St Thomas of Canterbury, 1680. James II. attached them to his Court, making Francis Plowden his Controller, while his wife was Maid of Honour to Queen Mary Beatrice.

When James and his Queen went into exile, Francis Plowden and his family followed them, and for the next generation this branch of the Plowdens formed part of the mournful pageant that centred round the exiled monarch in his phantom Court at St Germain's.

The little four-year-old Mary Plowden, of whom Miss Strickland tells a pretty anecdote, showing how she always managed to get out of penance by getting the King to send for her to his room, was the daughter of Francis and Elizabeth Plowden, and in after years became the wife of Sir George Jermingham of Cossey.

Edmund, the elder brother of Francis Plowden, married Penelope, daughter of Sir Maurice Drummond, Bart. Four of their sons entered the Society of Jesus. The portrait and records of Sir John Perrot, which are now at Plowden, were brought thither by Penelope Drummond, his descendant. Of this extraordinary man, a reputed son of Henry VIII. and consequently half-brother to Queen

Elizabeth, who made him Lord Deputy of Ireland, Rawlinson says: "As he did exceed most men in stature, so did he in strength of body; his hair was auburn, until it grew grey in his elder years; his countenance full of majesty; his eye marvellous, piercing and carrying a commanding aspect, insomuch that when he was angry, he had a very terrible visage or look, and when he was pleased, or willing to show kindness, he then had as amiable a countenance as any man." There is also at Plowden a portrait of a Mary Perrot, who cannot with certainty be identified. She is represented dressed in black velvet, and wearing a black gauze veil. The date of this portrait is 1594, two years after Sir John's death in the Tower. Underneath is the following inscription in Latin: "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup; it is Thou that will restore my inheritance to me"; doubtless an application of the text to Sir John's attainder and the confiscation of his estates. As the quotation is from the Vulgate, it *may* indicate that Mary Perrot was a Catholic. Penelope Plowden, *née* Drummond, bequeathed a sum of £400 to the Benedictines of Lambspring for an English student for the priesthood. The old deed, preserved at Plowden, requires that "none be admitted or retained on this foundation but such as are of a pious conversation, of a contemplative spirit, and will in probability become religious men and priests. . . . The students admitted on this foundation shall be carefully instructed in mental prayer, and in case they become religious, peculiarly applied to the reading and practice of Father Augustine Baker's books and instructions." When priests, they had to say two Masses a week, one for the conversion of England, and the other for the souls in Purgatory, according to the intention of the foundress. The deed concludes: "These conditions upon the receipt of the £400 were assented to by Joseph Sherwood, Abbot, and his Council, and the seal of the monastery accordingly fixed on this schedule the 16th of September, anno 1684."

Dorothy, daughter of Edmund and Penelope Plowden, and sister to the four Jesuits above mentioned, was twice married, first to Philip Draycott of Paynsley, and after his death to Sir William Goring of Burton in Sussex. Three portraits of Dorothy are preserved at Plowden, as also a lock of her hair, "measuring five feet in length, of a rich brown colour," add the Records. Of Lady Goring we read in a little volume preserved in the convent of the Sepulchrine nuns at Newhall: "After the death of her husband Lady Goring retired into the English convent at Liège, and spent the remaining fourteen years of her life in the most heroic virtues. Limiting her own expenses to what was strictly necessary, she spent the whole of her jointure of £1000 per annum on the poor, or in benefactions to the various religious institutions, principally to the Jesuits' college and the Sepulchrine community with whom she dwelt. She died in the odour of sanctity in the year 1737." Her large prayer-book with silver clasps, reminds us of how familiar were our Catholic ancestors with the liturgy of the Church, for the Latin Office for the Dead and that of our Blessed Lady are quite worn away by daily use. During the lifetime of her second husband she kept up the chapel at Burton Castle till her death. In December 1688, the castle was raided by the constables and the mob, in the dead of night, and her chaplain, Father Anthony Selosse, S.J., was seized and carried to prison.

We must bring our notes to a close, only recording that the traditional piety of the house of Plowden has continued to our own days. In one generation during the latter part of the eighteenth century, out of fifteen children of William Plowden by his wife, Frances, daughter of Lord Dormer, two entered the Society of Jesus, three were professed in the Franciscan community of Bruges (now Taunton), another was a Sepulchrine at Liège. Nor were the fruits of the same ancestral tradition less copious in the nineteenth century. (Dame Benedicta Plowden was professed among the Benedictines of Brussels in 1732.) Several have in these latest times joined the Sisters of Charity, and as we said at the beginning, the family is represented at present among the nuns at St Augustine's, Newton Abbot.

Our chronicler records on St Lawrence's day, 1625, the profession of Sister Grace Constable. The name of Constable calls up so many holy and inspiring Catholic memories that we cannot omit an outline of the family history of the Constables.

For the origin of the name we must go back to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when the redoubtable Norman barons who bore the name of De Lacy, and were hereditary Constables of Chester, seem to have divided their time between fighting the Welsh and building monasteries, save when leading their followers in the armies of the Crusaders. One of the most renowned of these powerful Lords Marchers, Roger de Lacy, justiciar, Lord of Pontefract, and Constable of Chester, who died in 1212 or 1211, had two sons, of whom Robert, the younger, obtained from his elder brother a gift of certain manors, whereof that of Flamborough was the chief. Robert forthwith dropped the name of De Lacy, and assumed as a surname that of Constable. With the posterity of the elder brother, who became Earl of Lincoln, we having nothing to do. But Robert's descendants, the Constables of Flamborough, held their stronghold on that promontory of the Yorkshire coast through twelve generations, till another Sir Robert lost his estates with his life for his loyalty to the faith of his fathers. Of this holy martyr and his noble father, I have a few words to say.

The eleventh in descent from that Robert who first assumed the name was Sir Marmaduke Constable of Flamborough, known as the "Little Sir Marmaduke." His charmingly quaint epitaph, still to be seen on a brass plate in Flamborough Church, records his honourable life history: how "with King Edward the Fourth, that noble knight," he passed into France in 1474; how he was present at the taking of Berwick in 1482, was made governor thereof, "and ruled and governed there all his time without blame"; and, finally, how at the age of threescore and ten he buckled on his armour to fight the Scots at Flodden, where he commanded the left wing of the English army. "Of the wing on the left hand was captain Sir Marmaduke Constable with his sons, Sir William Percy, and of Lancashire a thousand men," writes Stow. Staunch and loyal to their religion were the Constables, and the executors of his will not only founded four scholarships in St John's College, Cambridge, but likewise a fellowship for a priest to pray for the soul of Sir Marmaduke, according to the devout wish expressed at the close of his epitaph:—

> "I pray you my kynsmen, lovers and frendis all
> To pray to our Lord Jhesu to have mercy on my sowll."

The eldest of his gallant sons who bore the brunt of battle by their aged father's side at Flodden, Sir Robert, succeeded him. Never had the fortunes of the knightly house of Flamborough stood so high as when they were on the eve of ruin. The proud lord of thirty-six manors in Yorkshire and fourteen more in Lincolnshire, married to the daughter of Sir William Ingleby, his eldest son the husband of Lord Darcy's daughter, his own daughters married into the powerful families of St Quintin, Hussey, Gower, and Cholmeley, the last Constable of Flamborough, surrounded by his stout kinsmen, seemed to have assured the future greatness of his ancient line. But the chivalrous knight was also a fervent Catholic; all, and life itself, he was to lose for his faith and his God.

Fiercely resenting the religious innovations and the destruction of monasteries by Henry VIII., Sir Robert Constable, Lord Darcy, and others, under the leadership of Robert Aske, within the walls of Pomfret Castle, on the 19th of October 1536, took the oath of the Pilgrimage of

Grace. Under the banner of the Passion of Christ, and another of St Cuthbert, wearing on their arms a badge of the Five Wounds, an army of nearly 40,000 horsemen marched to Doncaster. It is needless to rehearse the story of defeat through fraud which has been so well told by Abbot Gasquet, and how in the enterprise Sir Robert Constable bore a prominent part, and held the town of Hull for the commons, for the movement was essentially a popular one. Among the noble victims sacrificed for their faith, Sir Robert Constable and Aske were hanged in chains at Hull; Lord Darcy was beheaded on Tower Hill: the Abbots of Jervaulx and Fountains, the Priors of Bridlington and Gisborough, John Pickering, a Dominican, and others, were hanged and quartered in different places. On the same occasion, the two Carthusians, Blessed John Rochester and Blessed James Walworth, suffered martyrdom for refusing the royal supremacy, though they were also charged with harbouring rebels in the monastery of Our Lady at Hull.

The Pilgrimage of Grace was, without a shadow of doubt, a rising in defence of the Catholic religion and the rights of the Holy See. There is not a point of difference between the motive for the execution of Sir Robert Constable and that of Blessed Thomas Percy in the reign of Elizabeth. Without forestalling the judgment of Rome, we need not hesitate to look on Sir Robert and his companions as having won the crown of martyrdom. The ancestral estates of the lords of Flamborough passed away from his family, and he was put to death as a traitor, but not one of his line died a death so glorious as was that of the last Constable of Flamborough. It is sad that his lineal descendants did not walk in his footsteps, for his son, Marmaduke, enriched himself with the spoils of the monasteries, and his recreant grandson, a retainer of the Earl of Leicester, betrayed the heroic leaders of the second Pilgrimage of Grace. The family in this elder branch ended with Sir William, who died in 1655.

With the attainder and execution, in 1537, of the brave and good Sir Robert, the first chapter closes in the Constable history, and the scene shifts from Flamborough to Everingham. Everingham, a name singularly dear to Catholics, has been for three centuries and a half, and is at the present day, connected with the history of our English Canonesses, as well as with that of other religious communities. The chapel of Everingham, where, on the 15th of February in this year, the Duke of Norfolk wedded a daughter of the noble house of Herries, has been a home of the Blessed Sacrament through all the long and dark period when men sought to drive it from England.

Over twelve centuries ago, St Everilda, a noble Northumbrian maiden, secretly fled from her father's house, and, journeying southward, came with her companions to a spot which a secret instinct led them to choose for the place of their monastic home, under the rule of St Benedict. It belonged to the See of York. St Wilfrid, then Archbishop, made it over to the saint and her nuns. From St Everilda, whose feast was kept on the 9th of July, Everingham took its name, and so did the knightly family of De Everingham, lords of this Yorkshire manor.

The estates of Everingham eventually passed to heiresses, and formed part of the dowry which Barbara, daughter of Sir John Suttill, brought to her husband, Sir Marmaduke Constable, brother of the martyred Sir Robert. Sir Marmaduke and his lady lie buried in Everingham Church, and with them begins the line of Constables of Everingham, whose family history for two centuries is a record of cruel suffering for the faith of their fathers, loyalty unto death for their King and country, and the life of prayer in the quiet cloister. Sir Marmaduke died eight years after his brother's execution in 1545; Lady Constable had gone to her reward in 1540. This line of Constables of Everingham, abounding in examples of heroism and sanctity, lasted for nine generations, ending with another Sir Marmaduke, called in our Louvain MSS. "the last of his house," who died unmarried in 1745. They formed alliances with the Catholic families of Manners, Conyers, Tywhitt, Sherborne, Radcliffe, and others, but no influence of kindred, nor unblemished integrity in public and private life, could avail to save them from grinding persecution for Christ's sake.

Barbara Constable, granddaughter of the first Constable of Everingham, by her marriage with Sir William Babthorpe, first brings the family into connection with our community. Of our two Sisters Babthorpe, grandmother and granddaughter, professed together at Louvain, we have spoken at length elsewhere. Henry, brother to Sir Marmaduke Constable, ordained priest in 1618, left the English College, Rome, for his native country in the following year, in which one of his brothers entered the Society of Jesus. The storm of persecution burst on the family in all its fury in the days of their nephew, Sir Philip, who succeeded his father in 1632, and died in 1664. By special favour he was allowed, in 1632, to go beyond five miles from his house, and at that time and for long after was paying £250 a year for non-attendance at Protestant services. At the outbreak of the Civil War he was over seventy-two years of age. His gallant brothers, Michael and Marmaduke, fell in battle for their King. His house was plundered and ruined by the soldiery, and from the hardships of their flight to York, his wife died. This lady, Anne Roper, was aunt to the two Sisters Roper of St Monica's. Sir Philip's reward was great in his posterity. Three of his children, Philip, Thomas, and Barbara, were professed in the Order of St Benedict. His daughter, Catharine, married to Edward Sheldon of Steeple Barton in Oxfordshire, saw her two daughters professed among our Canonesses, the elder of whom, Sister Delphina, was the fifth Prioress. His eldest son, Sir Marmaduke, dying at Antwerp in 1680, desired his body to be brought to St Monica's that he might rest among those to whom he had been ever devoted in life. He was buried there, before the altar of the Blessed Virgin. The second chapter of the story was nearing its close. The eldest son of the good baronet, Sir Philip, married Margaret Radcliffe, daughter of the first Earl of Derwentwater, whose two sisters were nuns at St Monica's, concerning which heroic race we shall have to write at length hereafter. Among the portraits at Everingham is that of Anne Constable in the white habit of a Canoness of St Monica's. She was Sir Philip's sister, and another sister, Elizabeth, is said also to have been a nun, though not at Louvain.

"The last of his race," Sir Marmaduke, son of Sir Philip Constable and Anne Radcliffe, of course a staunch Jacobite (St Monica's was of all our English communities perhaps the most intensely loyal to the house of Stuart), was imprisoned at York Castle in 1745, the year of Prince Charles Edward's invasion, but escaped and died abroad. His sister Anne married William Haggerston, whose elder brother had died fighting in Ireland for James II., while of his younger brothers, two were Jesuits and one a Benedictine. This stout old Northumbrian family has always been a type of the tradition of consecrating most of its children to God, in which holy practice the Catholic nobility of England stands unrivalled in modern times. Abbess Haggerston, O.S.B., of Pontoise, and Dame Mary Scholastica, her sister, a nun in the same holy community, were daughters of William Haggerston and Anne Constable. To their brother, Sir Carnaby, Marmaduke Constable left the Everingham estates.

The instinct of heroic deeds, whether in the winning the martyr's crown, laying down their lives on the battle-field, or bidding farewell to the world to embrace the poverty of Christ, as occasion offered, did not forsake the descendants of the Constables of Flamborough in the third chapter of their history, on which we now enter. William Haggerston-Constable of Everingham married, 17th October 1758, Lady Winifred Maxwell, daughter and heiress of Lord Maxwell and granddaughter of the attainted

Sister Anne Constable (of Everingham).

Daughter of Sir Marmaduke Constable of Everingham, Bart., and Anne Sherborne of Stonyhurst.

Portrait at Everingham. By kind permission of Lord Herries.

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Earl of Nithsdale. The Maxwells, Lords Herries, and, since 1667, Earls of Nithsdale, bear a stainless name for unshaken loyalty to the house of Stuart, especially conspicuous in the Lord Herries who guided Queen Mary in her flight, after the battle of Langside, and in the fifth Earl of Nithsdale, condemned to death in 1715, but saved by the heroism of his incomparable countess, sister to Lady Lucy Herbert, in religion Sister Teresa Joseph, the saintly Prioress of the Canonesses at Bruges.

To enter at length in the subsequent history of the family would be beyond our scope; we must content ourselves with chronicling a few names and facts. One holy and venerated name is cherished among the writer's own recollections. Catharine Constable, in religion Dame Romana, O.S.B., Abbess of St Scholastica's, Teignmouth, died there 21st February 1889. She was the granddaughter of William Haggerston and Winifred Maxwell, her parents being Charles Haggerston-Constable and Mary, daughter of Thomas Macdonald of Keppoch. All who knew Abbess Constable will remember her majestic and gracious presence, and the simplicity and gentleness of her conversation. But not everyone had the privilege of knowing her gifts of prayer and humility, the deep calm and peace of a noble spirit that seemed never to depart a moment from the overpowering thought of God's presence. She seemed to realise to the full the ideal of a Benedictine Abbess, as it has come down to us from the days of St Mildred or St Hilda.

By Act of Parliament passed in 1848, William Constable-Maxwell of Everingham, and all the descendants of William, Earl of Nithsdale, were restored in blood, and in 1858, Mr Constable Maxwell was declared entitled to the honour and dignity of Lord Herries of Terregles. He married Marcia, eldest daughter of the Hon. Sir Marmaduke Vavasour, Bart., whose saintly life was worthy of her descent. They had seven sons and nine daughters, and of these nine daughters six entered religion, two of them among the Canonesses of our Newton Abbot community. One of his sons, on his marriage with the great-granddaughter of Sir Walter Scott, Mary Monica Hope-Scott, added the family name to his own, and is now known as the Hon. Joseph Maxwell-Scott. His eldest brother, the present Lord Herries, married Angela Fitzalan Howard, daughter of Lord Howard of Glossop.

On the 15th of February in the present year, the Hon. Gwendolen Constable, their eldest daughter, became the Duchess of Norfolk. Her wedding to the Premier Duke of England, in the beautiful little church of Everingham, built by the late Lord Herries, was a scene on which those, who during a thousand years had made St Everilda's home a sanctuary of Catholic faith and holiness, must have gazed with delight. The splendour of Christian humility transcends incomparably the lustre of worldly greatness; but God has willed that to her ancient Catholic families England should owe a debt she can never repay for the loyalty to their ancestral faith, which has been one of the chiefest means in saving us from being sunk in heresy.

CHAPTER VI

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF BUILDING ST MONICA'S CHURCH, IN 1622, TO THE DEATH OF SISTER SUSAN LAYBURN, "THE MARTYR'S DAUGHTER," BRINGING THE CHRONICLE TO THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR 1625.

IN the year 1622, about the spring, we began to build our church, by reason that, our company increasing so fast, we were much straightened in the foresaid choir. Therefore we determined, to the honour and glory of God, to erect a church, taking for it divers portions of our Sisters that were professed, as also our worthy friend, Dr Cæsar Clement, who was Vicar-General and Dean of St Gudula's Church, in Brussels, gave us of his own goodwill £200 towards the same, being very desirous to assist in so good a work, and himself came here to lay the first stone. So that this summer the walls were built up unto the roof, but we pulled down two or three rooms of our outhouses for to set this our church in a convenient place, according as should be most commodious, as also we adjoined unto it the Father's house that now is. But this work being newly begun, after Whitsuntide, we were much frighted with a sudden invasion of our enemies, who through the carelessness of those who kept the waters had gotten the liberty to make a bridge, so that a good company of soldiers came over and got into these parts with armed might; burning houses and spoiling the country, coming even to the gates of Brussels and of this town also, which made us in heavy case, by reason that there were no soldiers in the town to defend it; but the religious men were forced to turn soldiers. Wherefore, in the English

College of St John's was one father who had been a soldier, to wit, Captain Stanley, who assisted well in this necessity, for he made them to trench up some of the town gates with earth, that the enemy might not break them open with their cannon shot, as also set the rest in order, and taught them what to do. But the enemy, as God would have it, had not the heart to assault the town, thinking themselves too few for such an exploit; only burned houses even to the town gates, and so at length departed to our great joy, who were all in extreme fear. For, not to omit what passed the while in our monastery, here was almost continual prayer kept, and many had heavy hearts, not knowing what would happen. The religious that lived without the town were gotten in to save themselves, and with them their sheep and cattle for safeguard, so that in the night our great court, which now is taken into ourselves, was full of sheep to be kept here. At one time we heard a false rumour that the enemy were gotten into the town and had entered the market-place, whereupon we all went to the choir and there prostrate on the ground prayed unto our Lord for help and assistance in this great distress. Many a bitter tear was then shed until we heard again it was not so; that the enemy were not gotten into the town. Thus did Almighty God send us a trial to see how we would be prepared to stand constant if we should have been brought to that great misery, for we feared more to be abused by the soldiers than to lose our lives. Finally, our hope alone was in God that he would assist us to stand constant in His love whatsoever might happen.

After this fearful brunt was passed, upon the 19th of June, in the same year, 1622, four nuns were professed together: Sister Frances Kemp, Sister Frances Fortescue, Sister Augustine Bedingfield, and Sister Mary Pool (Pole). Of whom to speak in particular: first Sister Frances Kemp was daughter to Thomas Kemp of Pentlow Hall in Essex, Esquire, who lived a schismatic, but before his death was reconciled and died a Catholic. His widow married afterwards with Sir Robert Brook; and she, being a Catholic, was desirous to place some of her daughters in monasteries, to see if they would have a mind to religion. Wherefore, this her daughter, Frances, came over with her half-sister, Susan Brook, and they entered together in our cloister, where this Frances Kemp lived till she was twenty-one years old as a scholar, being about seventeen when she entered, and then went into England to get her portion, being at that age due to her. Which having received, in her coming over again she was taken with other gentlewomen, and brought before the Bishop of Canterbury, whom she answered very craftily, yet was kept in prison about nine weeks, in which time she carried herself most courageously; afterwards by means of friends being released, she came over to this her desired habitation, and made her profession at the age of twenty-three.

Sister Frances Fortescue was daughter of Sir Francis Fortescue, son of the forementioned John Fortescue, of the Privy Council, of a great estate. His chief house was Salden in Buckinghamshire. This his daughter, Frances, was by her mother offered unto God in her childhood, and from the age of seven years had a mind to be a religious. She was at fit age deputed for the monastery of St Benedict's at Brussels, but about the time she should have come over, our Lord sent her the falling sickness, which detained her about four years, and after that, finding by means of a certain water that she used some remedy to her disease, she came over indifferent to choose any place as she liked. Yet, notwithstanding, coming to Brussels she thought it good at first to enter there as the place of her long design; but it was not God's will, for when she had mentioned to be admitted, and that the Lady Abbess was willing, presently she felt to her seeming as it were one to put her back, and began to be so troubled in mind, that she told the Abbess plainly she could not enter there; her mind was changed, so departing from that cloister she came away. The Lady Abbess took it not well, as thinking that somebody had persuaded her from them. But the truth is, it was only God alone, who would, as the event showed, have her here. For coming after to our monastery she liked it very well, and begging the place was admitted, and after her entry was never troubled more with the falling sickness, but went forward well and had very good health, so made her profession at the age of twenty-five years.

Sister Austin Bedingfield was the daughter of Francis Bedingfield of Redlingfield in Suffolk, Esquire, a very good Catholic and harbourer of priests, whose father, John Bedingfield, was also a most constant Catholic and suffered much divers times for his conscience. Having a priest taken in his house, he was fain to give a great sum of money to escape the law; and it was well that it happened in King James's time; for if it had been in Queen Elizabeth's reign he should have lost all and perhaps his life, too. He continued still his charity unto priests for all this, receiving willingly all that came, and maintaining one always of residence in his house; so that at length God took him to his eternal reward by a most happy and blessed death. For about the time of his decease he said devoutly these words of St Peter: "Behold, we have left all, and followed Thee, what, then, shall be our reward?" and thereupon as we may hope, found the answer of our Lord by entering into life everlasting, where he was to possess a hundredfold for all that he had lost in the profession of the true religion. His son married the eldest daughter of Mr John Fortescue, of whom we have already made mention when we spoke of Sister Mary Fortescue, where we declared that her sisters were married before she came out of England, and this was the eldest of them. About the time she was to be married she began to repent her, and said she would fain be a religious. Her father told her if she had showed any such mind sooner he would very willingly have yielded to it; but now that her portion was half paid she must stand to it. So she consented, but sought by her children to make up that which she did not perform herself, for having

WILLIAM, FIFTH EARL OF NITHSDALE. (Attainted.)

From Portrait at Everingham.

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nine daughters, eight of them she hath already sent over seas to divers places. This was the eldest, named Helen, whom her grandmother, Fortescue, brought with her to St Omer's, when she came to live there, being about eight years of age, and she lived with her grandmother till fifteen, at which time, having always had a mind to be a religious, her grandmother procured a place in our monastery, where her aunt Mary was professed some years before, and so she came here, having had education fit for religion, for she was taught at St Omer's the Latin tongue, and made now her profession at the age of eighteen, changing her name from Helen to Augustine, in honour of our Holy Father.

Sister Mary Pole (*Pool* in MS.) was daughter to Geoffrey Pole of the blood royal, for his father was brother to Cardinal Pole, of happy memory, and son of the worthy Countess of Salisbury, Margaret Plantagenet, daughter unto the Duke of Clarence, brother to King Edward the Fourth ; the which Countess was married unto Sir Richard Pole, Knight of the Garter, by whom she had Cardinal Pole, who stoutly withstood King Henry the Eighth in his wicked doings, when he broke off with the See Apostolic. Wherefore the said King made it high treason to any that should relieve or assist Cardinal Pole who was living then at Rome (*Room* in MS.), and at length having a mind to make away his mother, they suborned accusations against her that she had relieved her son. So that she was condemned to be beheaded, as also her two sons, the eldest being Lord Montague, and the other named Sir Geoffrey Pole. This noble Countess was thus by most treacherous dealing brought to her end without any trial or hearing of her defence, for wicked Cromwell had gotten it ordained that such as were convicted of treason should not be admitted to their answer, and himself by the great judgment of God fell into the snare which he had made for others, and became the second or third that was put to death in the same manner.

When therefore the said Countess saw that she must die for so just and innocent a cause, she spoke thus of King Henry the Eighth: "Have I," said she, "put my hand upon his head to make him a Christian (for she was his godmother in baptism), and will he now in recompense cut off my head?" Thus was this noble lady beheaded for defence of justice at the age of sixty-six years, having been a widow from the age of twenty-five, which showed well her great virtue, and deserved to be styled among the number of martyrs. Her son, Sir Geoffrey Pole, being also condemned, took such extreme grief at the wicked and malicious proceeding against his mother and himself that he fell extreme sick, and was come even to the point of death before the executioner bereaved him of life. Whereupon his lady, being a very devout and good woman, took the heart to go to the King and beg his life in this distressed case, hoping, as it should seem, that if she could obtain his life of an earthly Prince, she might perhaps obtain it of the King of Heaven. Upon this her request they told the King that his majesty might well grant her this for her comfort, in respect that her husband was already as good as dead. She having then obtained her petition, caused presently five Masses to be said for him in honour of our Saviour's Five Wounds, unto which she was very devout; and behold, Almighty God heard her prayers, for as the fifth was a-saying he began to mend, and soon after recovered. But notwithstanding, his estate was all confiscated to the King, so that he had no more left than what was his wife's, who was an heiress, daughter of Sir Edward Paginham (Packenham), who was descended from the Kings of Ireland. By him she had many children, but of all the sons none had issue except her son, Geoffrey Pole, father to our sister, of whom to speak now.

He was a brave gentleman and courageous, a most constant Catholic, a harbourer of priests, and one who, being strong of hand, would beat the pursuivants and catchpolls so handsomely that they stood in great fear of him. Insomuch that once a pursuivant being sent down to serve a writ upon him for his conscience, he chanced to meet with the pursuivant upon the way; so that riding together the fellow began to speak something of Mr Geoffrey Pole, saying thus: "He is a shrewd man of his hands, for he did beat a brother of mine, but I have here something, I warrant, that will cool his courage"; and told him how he brought a writ for him. He heard him and said nothing who he was, but entertained him with talk and rode on together so long till he had him in a fit place, and then said to him: "Here is Geoffrey Pole; what hast thou to say to him?" The fellow pulled out his writ, and said, as the manner is, "The Queen greets you" (for it was in her reign). He hearing this, made no more ado, but drew out his sword, and said: "Look here, fellow, I give thee thy choice; either eat up this writ presently, or else eat my sword; for one of both thou shalt do ere we part hence."

The poor man began to quake for fear and durst not resist him, but like a coward was wholly daunted, and did indeed eat up the writ for mere fear rather than he would be killed. So became the writ of no effect, but only to punish the pursuivant for his pains. Such like good feats did this worthy gentleman perform, showing always his zeal unto the Catholic religion. At length he came over to this side the seas, where he died like a constant Catholic, in voluntary banishment, at Antwerp.

This his daughter, Mary, Almighty God chose for Himself, for having a mind to be a religious, she came out of England into France at the time when some English gentlewomen were about to set up a monastery there of St Benedict's Order, intending to be with them, but that design of the monastery's erection taking no effect, she lived with her brother at Paris, who loving her dearly, made her to keep house with him. So they lived there seven years until, her brother going to Rome, she returned into England and determined to come into these Low Countries to be a religious in some English monastery here. Wherefore she desired Mr Pits, a good priest, to procure her a place in some cloister that he thought fit for her; and he preferred her here, knowing well our monastery, for it was he that gave us our organ. Having then remained about a year in England to set her things in order, she took with her a cousin of hers, who also had a desire to be a religious, Mrs (Miss) Mary Lamb, of whom we shall speak more in due place. They both entered our cloister, but her cousin was not professed, so soon as she was, who now made her profession with the forementioned three nuns at the age of thirty-nine years.

The same year, 1622, the 1st of August, was professed Ursula Whitshall, lay-sister, whose father was Sir Ralph Babthorpe's bailiff, as also his godson. The Lady Babthorpe, hearing of her husband's death, was resolved to come over to be a religious; therefore sought to bring a maid with her who might also be a religious, and so asked her if she would go, who was well content; and so coming over with Lady Babthorpe, she presently got a great mind to be a religious and would fain have entered here with her lady. But we denied this her maid, Ursula Whitshall, at first, by reason that we thought we had lay-sisters enough, but at length, seeing her so earnestly desire to be among us, we began to be moved to take her, for she served in the town, Sir Thomas Liege, and did so pine away with desire to be here that her health began much to decay, wherefore we had compassion on her, and received her into our monastery, and she made her profession at the age of twenty-three years.

The same month, upon the 29th day, were professed together four natural sisters: Mary, Barbara, Lidwine, and Catherine Clapton (Clopton), daughters of William Clapton in Bishoprickshire (Durham), and their mother was of the chief house, named Anne Clapton of Clapton in Warwickshire, who being with her sister both heiresses, the elder was married unto the Lord Cary (Carew), afterwards Earl of Totnes; and this other was matched unto the foresaid William Clapton, Esquire. They were married very young, as commonly heirs are, he being only fourteen years of age and she twelve, after which he was sent awhile to study. Some time after their marriage it pleased Almighty God of His goodness to call them unto the Catholic religion, by what particular means we could not learn. But this much we know, that after they were reconciled they continued both very constant and suffered many molestations for their conscience. Yea, at last he lost all, by reason that having an office to receive the King's money in three shires, he putting the said office into a man's hand, because he doubted that being a Catholic he should not be permitted to keep it, the said man deceived him and sold the office away, insomuch that he was fain to buy it again. For King James, hearing that he had put it away from him because of his conscience, said he needed not to do so for he could trust him, having always found both him and his father faithful subjects, and so he bought it again. These two constant Catholics were very charitable in relieving of priests, and maintained always one of residence in their house, besides receiving those who came; so that at one time there hath been no less than a great table full. And being often troubled with pursuivants, Almighty God did wonderfully help them divers times; at one time the priest being abroad, hearing that searchers were coming towards the house, made haste to get in, because he would fain save the altar, which was then dressed in the best manner (not fearing himself, because they had a sure secret place), and just as he was coming indoors, one of the pursuivants said to him, "I arrest you in the King's name." "Why," said the other, "I am but a stranger, that came to see them." "That's all one," said he, "you shall go with me." The priest hearing this set a good face on the matter, and spake so to the pursuivant that for two pieces of gold he let him depart in peace, and in the meantime the altar and church stuff was safe put up. Another time the pursuivants came on a sudden at the stair's foot which went up to the chapel, where they had found all, but as God would, they chose another door to go in first, which had a leaden pulley so that it shut-to presently after them, and they could not possibly open it again unless they had had the trick how to do it. They, seeing this, chafed and said, "These Papists are witches"; but they let them knock on, till all things were put up safe the whilst, so they found nothing. They had an excellent place which was made all the length of a little garden underground, and could have held a dozen priests. The going into it was by a device in the parlour, and it had another going forth beyond the said little garden, where, if the secret place should be descried on the inside, they might get forth on the outside, and make haste to step into great woods or copses.

For all their frequent molestations, yet they never had any great matter of danger found in their house. So did our Lord preserve His servants; and having very many children, four of the daughters did desire of their parents to be religious. The eldest of these, named Mary, having always had a mind to be a religious, should have come over with Sister Dorothy Lawson, being of the same country in Yorkshire, but God ordained that her voyage then was crossed, perhaps that her sisters might go with her. For staying about one year and a half longer, three more got also a mind to religion and so agreed to come over together, and consulting with the priests that came to their house what place and Order they should choose, this place was judged and thought fittest for them. Wherefore, Brother Mallerie the Carthusian, at their request procured them a place in our cloister, and so they came over, and arriving at this monastery were admitted. The two middlemost sisters changed their names after their entry here at Confirmation, which Sacrament they received in this town, the one being named Joyce took Barbara, and the other, Jane, took the name of Lidwin.

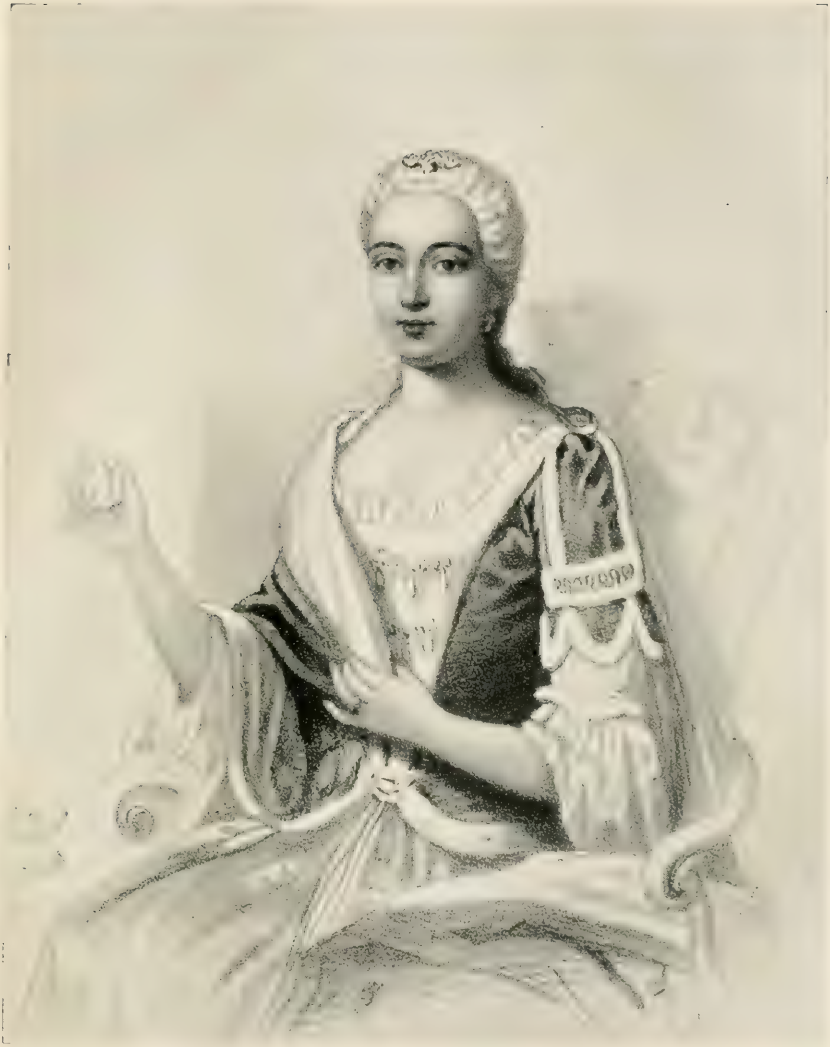
So they were professed together, the eldest being at the age of twenty-four, the second twenty-three, the third twenty, and the youngest nineteen. Afterwards the two middlemost sisters, Barbara and Lidwin, were sent to Bruges to begin the monastery; the eldest and youngest, Mary and Catherine, remained here. But this we must not omit, to wit, that after their profession their parents fell into such troubles by reason of continual exactions, for that being a Catholic and the King's receiver of money in divers shires (their father), was wholly undone. So they lost all they had, and then their only hope was in the Countess of Totnes, the forementioned sister, that she would leave them well at her death, having no children of her own. But she died a great heretic as she was, and left for her heirs one son and daughter of theirs whom she had gotten away and made them go to church, which daughter afterwards became a Catholic again. But these here could get nothing.

Upon the 4th of October the same year, 1622, was professed Sister Elizabeth Godwin, daughter of James Godwin, Esquire, dwelling in the city of Wells in Somersetshire, who, being a good Catholic, refused great preferments for the love of God, which he might have had, because they were against his conscience. For he was zealous in his religion and suffered long persecution, as also imprisonment and other molestations for the Catholic Faith. Having married a gentlewoman of virtuous disposition, but no Catholic, he brought her into the Church; who after she was reconciled became a woman of great virtue. For, to speak a little of her in particular, she was so humble and had such a contempt of herself, that she would scarce wear any good dressing but would go meanly clad, not beseeming her degree, unless her husband, or children, urged her to wear better garments; a rare virtue in a worldly (secular) woman, in which few do match her in these wicked times of pride and vanity. Moreover, she was so charitable unto the poor and needy persons, that she would give away whatever she could in the house that was any way to be spared; yea, it hath chanced that when she had nothing to give she would beg her daughters' gowns or petticoats to give away, saying she would give them better, but they being worldly given, would not yield to her herein. Moreover, her devotion to God was such that commonly she kept a priest in the house when she could, besides receiving of others that came.

She having three daughters only, it pleased God at length to send her a son, at the time of the coming in of King James. Which child was born with a red cross on his forehead, very perfect and plain to be seen, which continued until he was five years of age, and even to this day he beareth the print as it were of a chalice behind one of his ears. She had also after him another son, so that having five children, they were brought up virtuously; but the persecution still increasing, their father for fear of losing all from his son (for before he cared not so much when he had but daughters) yielded to go to church and remained out of the Church for a long time. And yet he omitted not his former devotions but lived still in fear of doing ill, and at length as he was one day revolving with himself his present case, out of a great sorrow for his fall and relapse in his former constancy, he made a full resolution to enter again into the Church and never more to fall although he should die for his conscience. This he indeed performed, and to see the goodness of God towards him, it was high time, for presently after he was reconciled he fell sick and so continued for the space of nine weeks; then, having received all the Sacraments, he made a holy end. After whose death the good mother endeavoured to bring her children into the Church, for as yet they were not Catholics; following the liberty of the time, because their father did so. But notwithstanding Almighty God showed that He had care both of him and them, for in whatsoever worldly vanity they began to take any great delight, commonly they were crossed, so that they could not but evidently mark the same.

The mother, therefore, labouring to have them (her children) reconciled, this her daughter, Elizabeth, was the first that entered into the Church, by reason that a Catholic maid who loved her dearly did often and earnestly desire of her to think upon the state of her soul, and entreated her also to read the Book of Resolution, which she did, and thereupon became so afflicted and tormented in mind that bursting forth into tears she promised within herself to begin a new life so soon as she could get any opportunity, and then was reconciled upon St Peter ad Vincula's day, after which she was very fearful of coming into trouble for her conscience; therefore she desired of her mother to give her leave to keep her Easter abroad. This was granted her, and being one day talking with the gentlewoman of the house where she then resided, they fell into discourse of the state and happiness of religious life, and thereupon she presently felt within herself an earnest desire to forsake the world and to become a religious, which she disclosed to the gentlewoman, who told her that seven miles off lived Sir Edward Parham, who was akin to her and would willingly for her sake assist in any such business. So they concluded to go both together on Easter Monday afoot privately, having only one man with them. Notwithstanding it did hail and rain both as they went and came, yet to her it was the delightfullest journey that ever she had, through the great desire of religion which God had put into her; and coming thither they found a captain who was then going into the Low Countries, by whom a letter was sent to procure her a place either here or else at St Benedict's at Brussels, which was no small comfort to her. But coming afterwards home to her mother she would not disclose what had happened, until her place was procured. In the meantime there happened an accident worthy of memory. There was a youth dwelling in the same town, of seventeen or eighteen years old, who was often seen to go into the church and pray before the old image that had remained there of former times; as also he would always make a cross in the beginning of all his writings, although he had neither friend nor aquaintance that was a Catholic. It happened that being extremely troubled with the toothache he came unto one of Mr Godwin's daughters, who had some skill in curing that molestation, to seek for a remedy ; who indeed helped him and made him well of it. In the meantime this other daughter, Elizabeth, once going forth into the garden, he seeing her alone came unexpected unto her and desired to speak with her. Which she perceiving was much abashed, and told him she durst not be seen to speak with any man alone.

He thereupon told her that in this case she was bound in conscience to do it because it concerned the salvation of a soul. She hearing that, bade him go into an arbour that was there and she would come to him ; which he did and, so with an afflicted heart he freely and openly disclosed his mind unto her, desiring her with much discourse for the love of God to help him to a priest with all speed, for that he was every night in fear to be strangled to death by the devil. She replied again that perhaps it might be but his imagination, but he affirmed it was not, but true as he said. And, indeed, all did see apparently (clearly) that he did consume away and looked like death. His friends not knowing the cause, gave out that he was poisoned. But at length after many hindrances and crosses passed, she procured him his heart's desire, appointing him one evening to come to her mother's house, where she lodged him all night, and in the morning about the break of day she caused the priest to steal secretly into his chamber, where he did reconcile him and celebrated Mass, none being present nor did any afterwards know of it but these three, to wit, the priest, himself, and she. It was a wonderful thing to see from that time forward what an unspeakable joy and comfort his soul possessed, not being able to restrain it, but that one might plainly perceive that he was strangely altered. Wherefore, getting letters of recommendation to bring him acquainted with the Fathers of the



LADY CATHERINE STEWART.

Wife of William Maxwell of Nithsdale.

From Portrait at Everingham.

[*Face page* 250.

Society of Jesus, he departed towards London, and they lovingly entertained him, so that after many things passing, which it would be too long to rehearse, they sent him over to St Omer's, and at length he was admitted into the Society as he desired, where through the great goodness of our Lord he profited so much in perfection that at his profession a miraculous sign was seen, and he is now accounted one of saintly life.

But to return to our Elizabeth; once she discovered her mind unto religion, both her ghostly father and other priests dissuaded her from it what they could, saying that perhaps it was not a right vocation, and that she might do more good in the world, which was a sore trial to hinder her. But the providence of God provided her a remedy when her ghostly father's help failed, even by a stranger. For at that time there chanced to come into the city of Wells a young man, a physician, who had lived among the Jesuits and was very fervent in spiritual things. He lodging not far from their house, one day espied the three sisters walking together in the garden, and thereupon Almighty God moved him to write a spiritual letter unto them, wherein he praised much the state of virginity, which liked her very well, and about the same time, her mother being sick, he had good occasion to come to the house for to minister physic unto her. Whereupon this, our principiant in religion, got means to speak with him privately and disclosed her mind to him, what a great desire she had to be a religious, and how all dissuaded her from it. He then, contrary to them all, animated her therein, and to assure her it was the best step she could take he would still, when he came to her, bring with him some one point or more which he had gathered out of the Holy Scripture or good doctrine to confirm her in her vocation, insomuch that he brought her twenty-two points in all, and did in effect so confirm her in that good resolution that nobody afterwards could remove her. Among other things, in their conferences together he told her a thing that happened to himself, which, because it shows the power of beads and other hallowed things against the devil, we will here set down. He said how once coming into the entrance of a town he espied the devil sitting upon a stake in the likeness of a black crow with a dark mist about him, which led him soon to suspect who that crow or raven was. Wherefore he took up stones and flung them at him. But the foul fiend cared not for them nor stirred at all for all that he flung. He seeing this took out his beads and flung them at him, and then he presently flew from thence on the top of a plum-tree which was in an orchard thereby, and thus taking the upper branch which came from the body of the tree with his claw, he made no more ado but with his black claw took the whole tree by that sole branch, and wreathed it once or twice about and thereupon plucked it up by the root and laid the whole tree there along pulled out of the earth, and so vanished away, leaving a filthy stink behind him. After that the people round about came wondering to see the tree so plucked up and laid flat above man's power.

Now to go on with our young gentlewoman, Mrs (Miss) Elizabeth Godwin: she having news that her place was granted in this monastery of St Monica's, was very joyful, and being immovable to all dissuasion, she got over seas by fit and convenient means and chanced to come in the company of the Lord Morley's daughter, Frances Parker, and of our Sister Clare Copley, who came directly also to our cloister, and on arriving at Brussels, they left Lord Morley's daughter, who was deputed to St Benedict's Monastery, and came both here to Louvain; so they were both received, and this one having first the place was first professed upon St Francis's day, the other stayed longer, as we shall declare in due place.

This year, 1622, died Mary Thorowgood, lay-sister, of a new disease which then reigned in the town, and she being the gate-sister, and serving in the father's house, had taken the disease of some that came to the gate, for it was somewhat infectious. She had ever since her being in the cloister been a good soul, of a sweet disposition and good nature, so that she pleased all, both those of abroad and those within, carrying herself with great edification. For God led her by so easy a way that she had little difficulty in well-doing, insomuch that she would sometimes desire to do a little penance; she said she had no difficulty besides. She now had a short and speedy death, but very painful for the time it lasted, which was about a week. So she ended happily her days, having been four years professed, and God assisted us so well that none else died here of that disease, though some were sick.

Upon the last of July, this year, was professed a nun, Sister Agnes Tasburgh, daughter to Sir John Tasburgh of Flixton in Norfolk, who was a hot Protestant, but her mother was a good Catholic, and daughter to the old Lady Tasburgh, also a good Catholic, but in her youth brought up a heretic, for being daughter of the Lord Delawarre who was a great Protestant; when she came to years of marriage she loved one Mr Cressy, who, being a gentleman, yet waited upon the Lord Delawarre. Wherefore he understanding of his daughter's affection towards him, put him away, and compelled her to marry one Mr Weema, by whom she had one or two children. But he then dying, she followed her former love and married Mr Cressy before her father had knowledge thereof, and this Mr Cressy having been beyond seas, was become a Catholic, and so made his wife one too.

But before we proceed further, it shall not be amiss to relate a memorable thing. There lived in the Lord Delawarre's house a waiting gentlewoman named Mrs Marren, who governed the house and brought up the children, for she was a wise and discreet woman; who being one morning early risen saw standing at her chamber window one dressed in a priest's habit, with a corner cap on his head, whereat she wondered, knowing men went not so now in England, and having put on her clothes she went to him. Who presently turned towards her and showed her a book open wherein were drawn two ways, one towards heaven and the other towards hell, and withal in that book he showed her all the sins she had committed. Then he spoke and said: "If you continue to live here you shall go thither, to wit unto hell; but if you go to live with Mrs Cressy you shall go to heaven;" and thereupon vanished away out of her sight. She reflecting hereupon would by no means stay with the young lord and his Puritan lady (the old lord being dead), although they much desired her, but went to live with Mrs Cressy, and so became a Catholic. After that she led a very virtuous and exemplary life, living till she was a hundred years old. Mrs Cressy had some children by him (her second husband), among whom was this daughter, mother to our Sister Agnes, and it chanced afterwards that she married her unto a nephew of her husband that then was. For, Mr Cressy dying, she married again to Sir Thomas Tasburgh, and so they agreed that Sir John Tasburgh, a man of a fair living, should match with the daughter of hers, Mrs (Miss) Lettice Cressy, mother to our Sister.

But to say something also now of the old Lady Tasburgh: she was naturally very liberal, and joined thereunto the virtue of charity, always doing some good deed or other, and among these it was no small charity which she exercised towards little children, that were laid at her door. It happened once that when this our Sister was in the house of her grandmother, betimes at break of day she heard the parrot which did hang in the porch of the house to make such a noise that she wondered what he ailed, and so bade one of the maids to go and see what the matter was with him. She going down found a little foundling laid at the door of the house in the porch, which made the parrot to keep such a stir. After that, going to my Lady Tasburgh and telling her of it, presently she bade them go and take up the child, and to one of her sons, that was in the house, "Go forth," said she, "and buy all the clothes that are necessary for the child, and bring me also a nurse for it." With that he rapped out an oath protesting that if she took this course all the children in the country would be brought to her, as one had a little before been brought; but she answered, if they came all she would take them. She would not leave her charities, and made this child to be christened conditionally if it had not been before. She was also very devout at her prayers, and would be merry in company. Yet going from them at her set times would presently put herself in the presence of God, and oftentimes with tears pray fervently. Her daughter also was a good Catholic, but her husband, Sir John, a most perverse heretic, yet he permitted his wife to keep her religion, but would have all his children to be brought up in heresy. Yet Almighty God ordained so well that in time they came all to be Catholics, except only one daughter, who, having been converted as the others, yet by her husband was perverted again.

And to come now to our good Sister Agnes: she was the eldest child, and the most beloved of her father. He brought her up in heresy, but coming to years of discretion, God Almighty so enlightened her that she determined to follow her mother's religion, and was secretly reconciled to the Church, and that she might continue a Catholic, she fell in love with a French gentleman who was a Catholic and lived in her father's house as his companion. Coming out of France he lived for a time with Sir John Tasburgh and would speak sometimes of the Catholic religion to her, which made her so to affect him that she would willingly have married him, that her father might not match her with a heretic. But so soon as Sir John had notice that his daughter loved him, he, mistrusting that she might be of her mother's religion, presently put the French gentleman out of his house, and forbade her to speak with him, or go to him where he was. He also first, by all the fair means possible, endeavoured to make her renounce her religion, for he loved her exceedingly and promised that if she would do so he was content to give her alone half his estate. But seeing that no fair means prevailed, he was very angry, and determined by severity to make her yield unto his will. Whereupon, one day he called her to him, in the presence of her mother, and was so sharp and wrathful with her that, at last, he said he would cut her tongue out of her head if she spoke one word more in defence of her religion, and would not renounce the same. But for all that she would not yield, whereupon he turned her away, bidding her to depart from him and never to expect one penny from him, as though she were not his child. This happened upon St Agnes's day, which made her afterwards take the name of Agnes at her profession.

She went then from her father's sight, but lived secretly in the house for some time and passed a hard Lent, her father having forbidden any to relieve her, insomuch that she was glad to live upon the skins or heads of herrings, or what other scraps she could get, until that the old Lady Tasburgh, her grandmother, sent for her, and understanding that she had a mind to be a religious (for God in this time of trouble and misery had given her a call thereto), she willingly provided her of a sufficient portion for it, and so sent her over to Dr Kellison, President of the English College. He provided her place here in our cloister because she would not be at Douay with her cousin, for that she lived then in an open monastery not enclosed. And so she came hither, and after her time of probation made her holy profession at the age of twenty-five years, changing her name to Agnes.

Upon the 8th day of October, in the year 1623, was professed Sister Mary Lamb, daughter of Richard Lamb, Esquire, who being descended of a good house in the North country, his ancestors lost their means in the civil wars that were then in England between the royal houses of Lancaster and York. But yet some part of the estate remaining at the death of his elder brother, it rightly belonged to him. He notwithstanding could not get it by law in regard that

Lady Winifred Herbert.

Daughter of the Marquis of Powis, Countess of William, fifth Earl of Nithsdale.

From Portrait at Everingham.

[*Face page* 256.

he was a Catholic, for his adversaries prevailed against right and him. Wherefore he lived with the Lord Montague, being a gentleman belonging many years unto him. His wife's mother was sister of Mr Geoffrey Pool and niece to Cardinal Pool (Pole), of which descent we have already made mention. This couple were both very constant and zealous Catholics, great harbourers of priests, besides keeping one always of residence in the house. It chanced at one time they had no less than ten priests at table. This their daughter, Mary, from her childhood had some inclination to be a religious, but youthful delight in vain things made her delay to resolve herself wholly; yet she would often pray earnestly to God that He would provide for her in that state which He should please, as indeed He did. For it happened that her cousin, Mary Pool (Pole), coming out of France into England, as we have declared, to settle her fortune, intending to come into these Low Countries to be a religious, she lodged in her cousin Lamb's house, where it happened that she began to try this their daughter, Mary, whether she had any mind to religion, and therefore would often speak to her in praise of religious life, and told her it was not so hard as people make it, and how they lived very contented in that state, and, finally, she concluded, being unwilling to persuade her unless she liked it herself, saying thus: "But you have no mind thereunto." Whereupon she assured her and affirmed that she had, and was willing to come over. With this she told her parents, who were very glad that their eldest daughter would give herself to God. So she came over with her cousin, Sister Mary Pool, and lived a good while (as) a scholar, but at length was professed at the age of twenty-three years.

The same year was professed Sister Elizabeth Lumbos (*al.* Lumbart), lay-sister, daughter of one Francis Lumbos, a yeoman, dwelling in the city of Wells, a good, honest man and well-minded (towards the faith), so that our Lord did him the favour that he was reconciled a fortnight before his death, and died happily; as also her mother dying ten years after was reconciled about half a year before (her death). She being then at the age of twenty years, but no Catholic, the Divine Providence so ordained that one Mrs Moore, of whom we shall speak in due place, whom she had served a year before, was moved to send for her to London (hearing that her mother was dead) for to bring her over with her and make her a Catholic. So she came to St Omer's and served her, and was reconciled to the Church by a Father of the College who assisted her very well. For having always had a great horror of confession, he helped her so with asking her almost all, that she was exceeding glad to have passed that fearful brunt.

Yet she (Elizabeth Lumbos) had no mind to be a religious, although her mistress would fain have allured her thereunto, until that once reading of St Monica's life and thinking that we were of her Order because our monastery bore her name, she got a desire to be among us. Presently her mistress most willingly procured her place here, having a young child of hers brought up here from the age of seven years, of whom we shall speak at her profession. Notwithstanding, she lived still at St Omer's three years, and then having stayed so long since her place was granted, we, having lay-sisters enough, denied to receive her; but she persisted a fortnight in the town still earnestly desiring to be received, until at length our Rev. Father said once to her to try her, that because she was importunate perhaps her calling was not right. She, hearing this, that night prayed most heartily unto our Lord that if her calling was not truly from Him, our Superior might never admit her, so wholly resigned herself to be content as God should ordain. Being in this good disposition, the very next day our Reverend Mother sent for her, and took her without any more ado; so she now made her profession at the age of twenty-five years.

In the year 1624, died Sister Mary Winter, converse, having lived a good virtuous life in holy religion, and suffered much, both outwardly by the weakness of her bones, which, as we said at her profession, had been broken at nurse, as also by continual desolation of mind, which she bore with singular patience. Yea, she was so resigned to God's will in all her crosses and afflictions, that she often affirmed she would never wish that God should lead her by any other way than this of desolation, because she thought it was best for her natural disposition. She also mortified her own will and inclinations so well that we were much edified in her conversation, and suffered also patiently rebuke and reprehensions when they chanced unto her. So that having passed a rich time, though short, in this holy Order, it pleased our Lord to take her to himself by sudden but not unprovided death (as also her mother, Mr Talbot's daughter, had died suddenly), for she, being in the infirmary, weak and ill, we thought she had but her old weakness. She carrying exteriorly very patiently her pains, upon the day of St Peter's Feast came our Rev. Father to her in the morning, but she said she had nothing to confess, because she had been (to confession) not long before, and said withal she felt exceedingly ill. She communicated, it being holy day, and after dinner upon a sudden, sitting not far from the table, she gave a great shriek, whereupon they ran to her in haste to see what vehement qualm was come, and presently she gave up the ghost, so that when our Reverend Mother was called and others, she was found to be stark dead to this life, for to live, as we may well hope, in a better, where her celestial Spouse so suddenly called her, having been almost seven years professed, and twenty-five years of age. Our Lord pleased to end her temporal prenticeship, changing it into the eternal liberty of God's children in the land of the living.

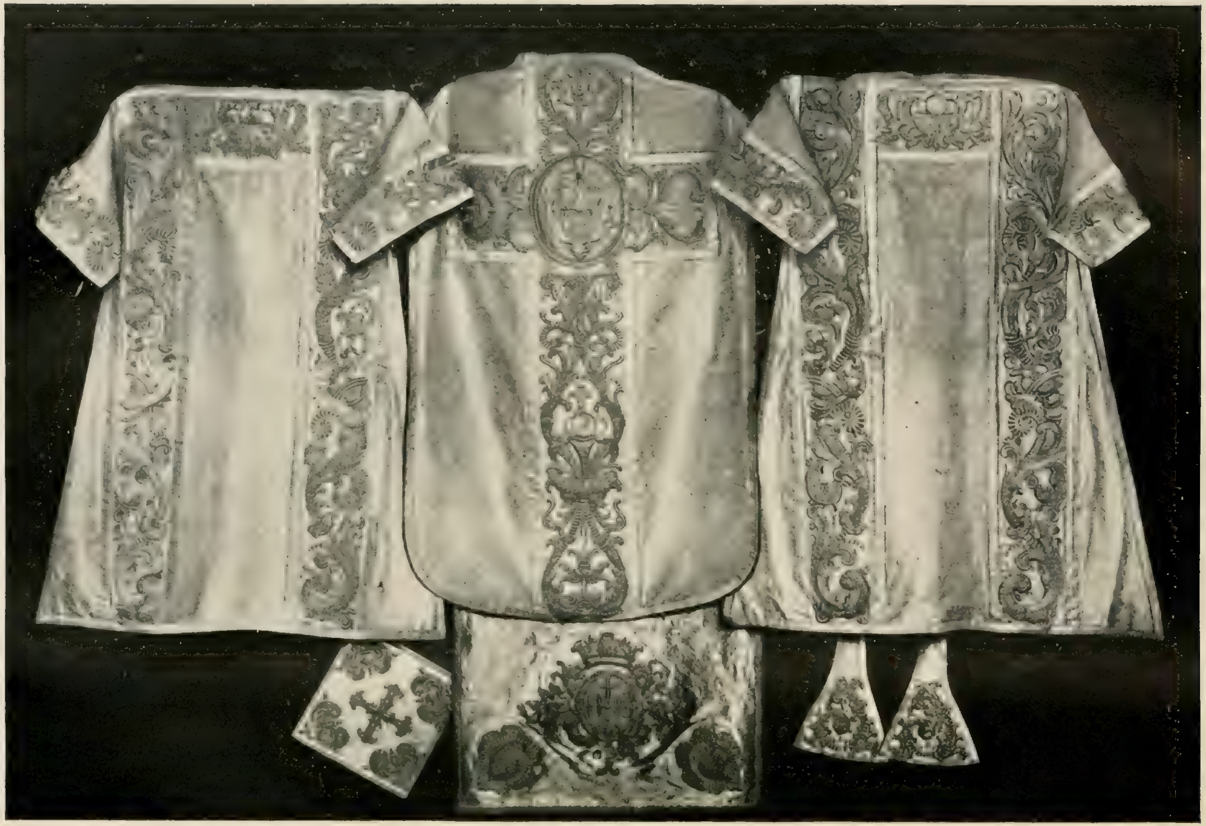
This year, 1624, about Easter our Church and Choir were wholly finished, so that we removed there in Holy Week and sang the Tenebrae Matins first in it, as also Mass and our service ever after. Our Church was hallowed by the Archbishop of Macklin (Mechlin) upon Trinity Sunday the same year, placing in the High Altar relics of the holy martyrs of the Theban legion, St Mauritius's companions, whose feast in September the Bishop ordained we should solemnize with a duplex feast, as also the yearly Dedication of our Church upon the next Sunday after the Octave of the holy Apostles St Peter and St Paul, in respect that between Trinity Sunday and that time there is seldom a week to be had free from occurring feasts, as that of Corpus Christi and Midsummer (St John the Baptist). Moreover, this summer the rest of our house was accommodated, as the Refectory was taken out in full length and placed as now it is ; also the little cloister that leadeth to the Choir made as it is, except that it was not paved that year with tiles, but only with bricks, which was discommodious in our going to the Choir. The work-chamber also was made up, with the cellar under it as now it is in place, where before the grate was ; and our Reverend Mother's chamber and two chimneys beaten down and taken away, making these rooms. Moreover, we made the sick-house as now it is, which before was the Father's house. Besides this, the great fair room over the kitchen, which before was our work-chamber, was now made into cells. Thus most of our house was accommodated as now it is this year, except the new bakehouse and washhouse were not built until afterwards, as we shall show in due place.

Upon the 19th of June the same year, 1624, died Sister Mary Welch, who had been a religious strict in the observance of the Order, and very careful in whatever she was employed, as also had been very laborious at St Ursula's although she was but weak in body, and brought a great portion to the house. She spared not herself in washing, sweeping, and other suchlike works, as also here in our monastery being of the very first that came, and having the office of Sacristan, it happened one time that by reason either that some were sick or had other hindrances, she saw none could come to Matins at four in the morning (as they thus used to do at first, being so few), and it being her office to call them up, she, rather than our cloister should stand one day without saying Matins publicly, set herself without any more ado in the forementioned little choir, and began to read the Matins alone in two kind of pauses, so as it were to make the two choirs, and so read out herself alone a long ferial Matins. She was of a very hasty and choleric nature, although she much bridled it; nevertheless, sometimes it broke forth, but this defect she made up for with soon acknowledging her fault, as also was always thereby so humbled in herself and shed so many tears for her hasty nature that she made good amends for it. So also at her death she acknowledged her fault with such humility and hearty sorrow that we were well edified, and so she rested happily in our Lord to enjoy the fruit of labours and combats in the overcoming of herself.

This same year, 1624, was professed in our new church Sister Clare Copley, daughter to Mr Anthony Copley, the third son of Lord Thomas Copley. This gentleman being a younger brother and always a Catholic, sought to raise his fortune by gaining the favour of great men; wherefore at the first coming in of King James he had notice of the treason then plotted, whereof he unwisely made himself one of the accomplices, and when all the whole matter was revealed to him, he went and disclosed it to the Council, thinking to gain some great recompense for his labour. But they, seeing he had so far engaged himself in the matter, proclaimed him traitor with Sir Griffin Markham who was in the said plot. Which exterior cross turned out notwithstanding to his greater spiritual good, for seeing that hopes in men failed, he gave himself after his coming on this side the seas to devotion, and took a voyage to the Holy Land, together with Mr Ambrose Vaux, and coming to Jerusalem they were both knighted at our Lord's Sepulchre, as the manner is, that when such pilgrims go there as can show sufficient proofs of noble extraction and capable of knighthood, if they will undertake to observe the points there proposed for to defend the honour of God in the manner set down, the Guardian of the Franciscan Convent there dubbeth them knights, after they have performed their devotions visiting the holy places. In their return home he died by the way, and Sir Ambrose Vaux coming home brought news of his death. But one thing we must not omit; to wit, that presently after his banishment the Lords of the Council sent for his elder brother, William Copley, and compelled him to reward his brother for the good service he had done, as they said, to the State, and obliged him to add about the worth of £20 a year to the former yearly annuity which he paid him before; as also ordained the whole annuity should be given to his wife, so long as she lived, who was a gentlewoman of the Isle of Wight. So after the manner of politicians, they were content on the one side to reward out of the other man's purse, and on the other side to disgrace him in the sight of the world.

But his brother, being a Catholic, durst not resist, and withal extended his charity further, which was to take his youngest daughter to keep of his own goodwill, she being about six or seven years of age, only because her mother did not care much for the child, but loved best the elder. He therefore first took this one away and afterwards got the elder into his hands upon composition of retaining back some £12 a year of the compelled yearly reward, being glad to make this bargain, as seeking only the good of both his nieces' souls. For their mother living at this time in and out of the church, having married another husband, he feared the children might be cast away; therefore he took them to bring up. But their mother after many crosses suffered by her other husband, at length was reconciled before her death, and ended her life a Catholic.

This younger daughter was named then Elizabeth. When she came to fit years our Lord gave her an earnest desire to become a religious. Wherefore she wrote so effectually that her place was granted here, and her cousin,



Eighteenth Century Vestments.

A Gift to St Monica's by the Earl of Derwentwater. Now at St Augustine's Priory.

[Face page 263.

young Sir William Copley, who was then married, promised to give her portion to religion, for he loved her dearly, as also her uncle, having brought her up as his own child. So they sent her over by such means as herself desired. But Almighty God assisted her well by the way in an occasion that happened, whereby she might have incurred great danger both of soul and body if she had not showed the grace of God to be in her, and that her virtuous education had not been in vain. So, at length, she arrived at Brussels, and was kindly entertained by our good friend, Dr Clement, although she was not akin to him, yet he furthered her to religion and gave her £10 for a gift at her profession, which she made at the age of twenty-one years, upon St John Baptist's Decollation, changing her name from Elizabeth to Clare.

Upon Michaelmas Day, the same year, 1624, were professed two lay-sisters, Catherine Colins and Alexia Hobdy. The elder was daughter of one Francis Colins, an honest man and a good Catholic, who suffered imprisonment and other molestations for his conscience. This his daughter, Catherine, was much given to virtue, having a great desire to religion, but deeming she had not sufficient means to help her to so great a happiness. She, notwithstanding, agreed with some other devout maids, by the consent of priests to make a vow of chastity, and so to live virtuously in the world. This she did at the age of twenty years, and her desire to religion continuing still, at length, about the time when Sister Ursula Gifford came over, Mr Standford (Stanford), our Sister Frances's father, writ a letter and procured her place here for a lay-sister, commending much unto us her virtue. So she came over with her and was admitted, making her profession at the age of thirty-four or thirty-five years to her great joy, for she thought that being far in years no place would admit her; but it was God's will.

Sister Alexia was the daughter of Thomas Hobdy. Her parents were no Catholics, but well-minded and of good moral life. She also went to church and was devout in that religion, but it pleased God to give her the first notion of being a Catholic by hearing an heretical bishop preach with what reverence and fervour they ought to receive their communion; which made her conjecture that surely it should be more than bread; and hearing the belief of Catholics about the Blessed Sacrament she liked it very well, and thought it was good reason to prepare themselves worthily thereunto. Afterwards she went to serve the Lady Jarningam (Jerningham), and in that house lived her own cousin, who was a priest, but she knew it not. He, notwithstanding, took care of her and instructed her in the Catholic religion, and afterwards reconciled her to the Church at the age of thirteen years. She also soon after got a great desire to be a religious, hearing them speak of nuns, and told her cousin of it; who answered that she was yet too young and that her friends would be displeased if she went from them. Therefore he bade her stay awhile, and he hoped to make her mother a Catholic, as indeed he did. She continued still her mind, yet wavering, by reason that worldly pleasures allured her, but at length grace prevailed, and she fully resolved to be a religious. Therefore she desired again of her cousin that he would help her to get over. He asked her where she would get means. She answered, that her father, she doubted not, would give her enough to be a lay-sister; he then asked her what Order she would choose. She answered, the Poor Clares. But he said it was too hard for her and asked if she would not be content to go where her former mistress's niece was, to wit, Sister Magdalen Throckmorton, for she had before served her aunt. She said: Yes, willingly. So he promised to assist her, and just about that time our Reverend Mother wrote into England to have some good strong maid sent over that could do good service for a lay-sister, because about that time we thought to have set up a brewhouse (but afterwards that design became frustrate, yet it was now of effect to receive this poor soul, who had so long desired this happiness). The aforesaid priest understanding of this letter, which was sent unto Sister Magdalen Throckmorton's friends, not far from whom she lived, thereupon sent over his cousin, and at her arrival we received her willingly, because she was a good servant. So she made her profession at the age of twenty-six years, changing her name from Elizabeth to Alexia, for devotion she had to this Saint.

This same year, 1624, died Sister Margaret Tremain. She was a good religious, fine in exterior things, ever ready to help and do what good she could, and being of a mild, sweet nature, was much beloved in the community. Our Lord took her away by a short sickness, for she got a sore ague which then reigned, and so in the space of a week she was well in health and dead, arriving by a speedy passage into eternal life, as we may hope, to enjoy her fill of that which in this life she wanted; for she could not here get the gift of prayer, and therefore resigned herself to God's will, and was the more diligent in outward things. She had been professed twenty-six years and was fifty-two years of age, being of the second company that came from St Ursula's.

Upon the 27th of the same month died another of the elders, Sister Susan Laborne (Leyburn), who being a martyr's daughter had herself suffered a long martyrdom, for she was very sickly ever since she came to this monastery, being of the second company that came from St Ursula's. Her pains were most of the colic and in her side, which she suffered with great patience, and would oftentimes say that God had sent her that which she could best bear; for, being of a very choleric nature, she could not, she said, have made so much profit of other crosses. She was very diligent still to do some profitable thing, as writing of good things and working some fine thing for the Church, having skill in many fine works, and could not abide idleness. For she found that busying herself still in doing something or other made her pains more tolerable (a good example for those that are sickly), except sometimes they were so great that she could do nothing at all. So that oftentimes she remained the greatest part of the night upon her knees, finding most ease in that posture.

But, at length, about a year before her death, her many pains became so great, that she said they were rather torments than pains, lying for the most part bedridden, and so ill that we were fain to watch with her all night, and because it continued so long almost all the convent had occasion to exercise this charity towards her by turns, as they were appointed. In the end she died in most extreme torment, so that her body therewith remained crooked after her death. But being still resigned to God's will, her torments ended, as we may hope, with eternal repose. She had been twenty-five years professed.

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From the

— NEVILLE of Roulstone, Co. Leicester.

ROBERT WOODFORD (4th son) of Brightwell, in parish of Burnham, Bucks, married in 1489. = ALICE, daughter and heiress of Thomas Gate, Esq., of Brightwell, Co. Bucks.

f

MARY, wife of JOHN EDE of Sussex.

ELISABETH, a Noon. (Nun.)

nd son, G
rd son, A

URSULA, wife of WALTER LEIGH of Padway, Co. Warwick.

SIBELL, wife of JOHN AILYFFE of Southampton.

DOROTHY, wife of JOHN BYSSCHOPP of Gt. Dareys.

CECILY, wife of — WESTON of Banbury, Co. Oxon.

SUSAN.

ALICE.

ABETH,
.P.

S.

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